The BOOK of RUNES

Commentary by
Ralph Blum

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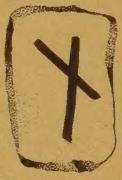

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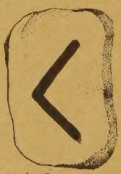

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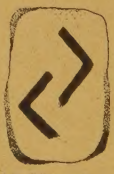

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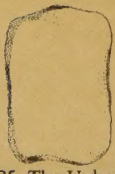

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THE VIKING RUNES Traditional Meanings

ᛗ	The Self	Man, the Human Race
ᚷ	Partnership	A Gift, Offerings from the Gods or from Chiefs to Loyal Followers
ᚨ	Signals	God, the God Loki, Mouth (source of Divine Utterances), Rivermouth
ᛟ	Separation	Property or Inherited Possessions, also Native Land, Home
ᚾ	Strength	Strength, Sacrificial Animal, the Aurochs (*Bos primigenius*), species of wildox
ᛈ	Initiation	Uncertain Meaning, a Secret Matter (Rune of Mystery)
ᚾ	Constraint	Need, Necessity, Constraint, Cause of Human Sorrow, Lessons, Hardship
ᛝ	Fertility	Ing, the Legendary Hero, later a God
ᛇ	Defence	Yew-tree, a Bow Made of Yew, Rune Magic, Avertive Powers: Runic Calendars or 'Primstaves'
ᛉ	Protection	Protection, Defence, the Elk, Sedge or Eelgrass
ᚠ	Possessions	Cattle, Goods, the Vital Community Wealth
ᚹ	Joy	Joy, also in *Cynewulf's* Runic Passages, Absence of Suffering and Sorrow
ᛜ	Harvest	Year, Harvest, A Fruitful Year
ᚲ	Opening	Torch, Skiff, Ulcer, Associated with Cult of the Goddess Nerthus
ᛏ	Warrior	Victory in Battle, a Guiding Planet or Star, the God Tīw
ᛒ	Growth	Birch Tree, Associated with Fertility Cult, Rebirth, New Life
ᛖ	Movement	Horse, Associated with the Course of the Sun
ᛚ	Flow	Water, Sea, a Fertility Source (See Grendel's Mere in *Beowulf*)
ᚺ	Disruption	Hail, Sleet, Natural Forces that Damage
ᚱ	Communication	A Riding, a Journey: Refers to the Soul After Death, Journey: Charm
ᚦ	Gateway	Giant, Demon, Thorn
ᛞ	Breakthrough	Day, God's Light, Prosperity and Fruitfulness
ᛁ	Standstill	Ice, Freezing, in the *Prose Edda* the Frost-giant Ymir is Born of Ice
ᛋ	wholeness	The Sun
ᛟ	The unknowable	The Rune of Destiny

J. M. PARSLEY

The BOOK of RUNES

To lend courage to virtue
and ardour to truth ...

Dr Samuel Johnson

The BOOK of RUNES

A Handbook for the Use of an Ancient Oracle: The Viking Runes

Commentary by
Ralph Blum

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This book is lovingly dedicated to
Margaret Mead

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For my introduction to the study of Oracles, I am indebted to Dr Allan W. Anderson, Department of Religous Studies, San Diego State University. Dr Anderson, with his substantial working knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, Sanskrit and Chinese, taught a unique course entitled 'The Oracular Tradition', in which he presented the *I Ching* as 'the only systematic sacred text we possess.' His scholarship, his concepts ('Strive to live the ordinary life in a non-ordinary way ... In the spiritual life there is no momentum; you are always at the beginning') and his creative influence encouraged me to persevere in my study of the finest art of all – the art of self-change.

My first attempts at writing this handbook for the use of the Runes as a personal Oracle included an additional seventy-three pages of history, philology and archaelogy. For support and encouragement in reducing the text to this more concise and manageable form, I gratefully thank my friend and editor Bronwyn Jones.

Ralph Blum

PREFACE

The Runes as described here are healing, merciful Runes; they will do you no harm. Learn their language and let them speak to you. Play with the possibility that they can provide 'a mirror for the magic of our Knowing Selves,' a means of communication with the knowledge of our subconscious minds.

Remember that you are consulting an Oracle rather than having your fortune told. An Oracle does not give you instruction as to what to do next, nor does it predict future events. An Oracle points your attention towards those hidden forces and motivations that will shape your future by their unfelt presence within each present moment. Once seen and recognized, these elements become absorbed into the realm of choice. Oracles do not absolve you of the responsibility for selecting your future, but rather direct your attention towards those inner choices that may be the most important elements in determining the future.

How can random selection of marked stones tell you anything about yourself? Perhaps these Rune interpretations are simply so evocative that each contains *some* point which can be accepted as relevant to *some* part of what is happening at the limits of consciousness any day, any time, to anyone. That is the easiest possibility to accept

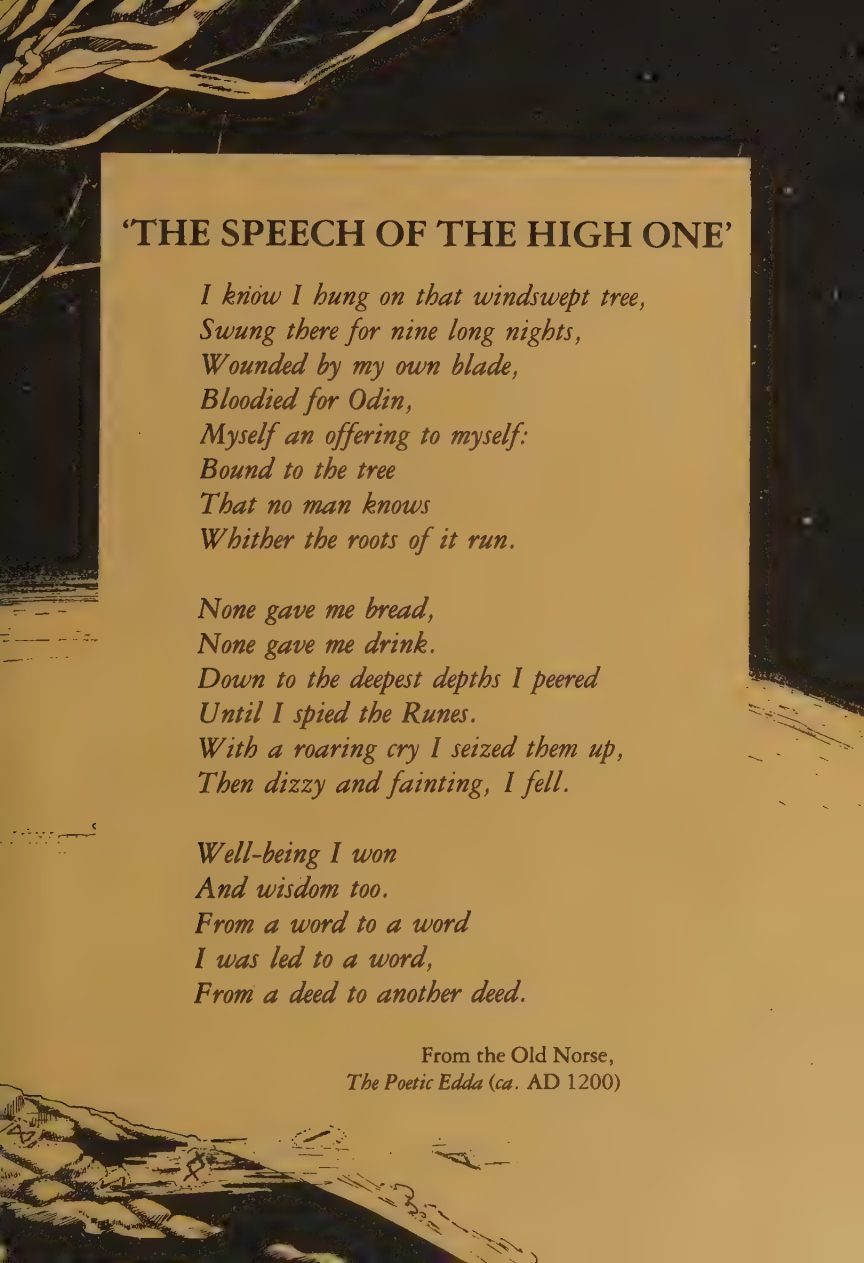
from a strictly scientific standpoint. Nevertheless, my own play with these Runes has shown coincidence piled upon coincidence and an apparently consistent 'appropriateness' in each Rune reading which is difficult to explain by the mechanism I have just described.

Can there be other factors that distort the expected randomness of Rune selection so as to provide a language by which the subconscious makes itself and its expectations known? For myself, I maintain an open mind, reminding myself that observations should not be discounted simply because their underlying mechanisms have not yet been satisfactorily explained.

So go ahead. Try out these Runes. See if this Oracle can mirror your subconscious process, but remember that such a link may take practice to develop. The Rune interpretations offered here come from the meditations of a gentle, healing mind. They will speak to you of change and growth. The only negativity you will find here relates to the blockage of appropriate growth, while all the positive aspects are transcendent, transforming and lead to breakthroughs. The subconscious you will encounter here is not a fearsome beast in need of obedience training. It is the inner seeker-after-truth who must be helped to save us from ourselves.

Dr Martin D. Rayner,
Professor of Physiology,
University of Hawaii School of Medicine

Odin on the Yggdrasil,
or World Tree,
Spies the Runes



'THE SPEECH OF THE HIGH ONE'

I know I hung on that windswept tree,
Swung there for nine long nights,
Wounded by my own blade,
Bloodied for Odin,
Myself an offering to myself:
Bound to the tree
That no man knows
Whither the roots of it run.

None gave me bread,
None gave me drink.
Down to the deepest depths I peered
Until I spied the Runes.
With a roaring cry I seized them up,
Then dizzy and fainting, I fell.

Well-being I won
And wisdom too.
From a word to a word
I was led to a word,
From a deed to another deed.

From the Old Norse,
The Poetic Edda (*ca.* AD 1200)

INTRODUCTION

Few people today have even heard the word 'Runes'. Among those of Scandinavian descent and among readers of Tolkien, yes, a light goes on. But that's about the extent of it. An ancient alphabetic script, each of whose letters possessed a meaningful name as well as a signifying sound, Runes were employed for poetry, for inscriptions and divination, yet never evolved as a spoken language. Next to nothing has been written about the Runes as a contemporary Oracle.

Both the alphabetical ordering and the letter interpretations found in *The Book of Runes* are non-conventional. The interpretations of the Runes as used for divination in ancient times are lost to us. While *legomonism* – the passing on of sacred knowledge through initiation – was, no doubt, practised among Rune Masters of old, their secrets were not recorded or, if recorded, did not survive. The Runes and their symbols were employed by warriors bent on conquest. It is my hope that the Runes, in their contemporary use, will serve the Spiritual Warrior, the one whose quest is doing battle with the self*, the one whose goal is self-

*Throughout *The Book of Runes*, the term *self* is used to represent the little self or ego-self, and *Self* to signify the Higher Self, the All-knowing or Witness Self, the Watcher Within.

transformation. The sacred Hindu text *Bhagavad Gita* chapter 6, verse 5, says it succinctly:

Lift up the self by the Self
And don't let the self droop down,
For the Self is the self's only friend
And the self is the Self's only foe.

It is with the Spiritual Warrior in mind that I have prepared *The Book of Runes*. Free of anxiety, radically alone and unattached to outcomes, the Spiritual Warrior practises absolute trust in the struggle for awareness, and is constantly mindful that what matters is to have a *true present*.

It takes a long time to grow in wisdom, to say nothing of the time it takes to learn to think well. Following the Warrior Way is not for everyone, although it is available to all who are willing to undergo its challenges. To embark on this path is to cultivate the Higher Self, the one who can profitably converse with the Runes.

Before beginning to write, I consulted the Runes about the timeliness of the undertaking. I drew three Runes and got *Inguz* ᛜ, the Rune of Fertility and New Beginnings; *Nauthiz* ᚾ, the Rune of Necessity, Constraint and Pain; and *Dagaz* ᛞ, the Rune of Breakthrough and Transformation. *The Book of Runes* was conceived in one fertile, sleepless night which I shall describe later. The constraint required during the long hours spent in editing and reworking the first half of the book was certainly not without pain. And the work itself has been a source of transformation in my own life and, through their introduction to the Runes, the lives of many others.

All along the way, since beginning this book, there have been positive signs and omens. The final sign came as I completed the Afterword. Since the last Rune Masters lived in seventeenth-century Iceland, it seemed to me fitting to close the loop with an Icelandic blessing. In order to check the spelling of *Gud blessi thig*, the Icelandic for 'God bless you', I placed a call to the Icelandic Consulate in New York. The woman who answered confirmed the spelling. When I told her what I was writing, and about my work with the Runes, she paused a long moment, then said, 'My name is Sigrun'. It means 'Rune of Victory'.

INVOCATION

God within me, God without,
How shall I ever be in doubt?
There is no place where I may go
And not there see God's face, not know
I am God's vision and God's ears.
So through the harvest of my years
I am the Sower and the Sown,
God's Self unfolding and God's own.

Rune stone, Västerby, Uppland, Sweden,
work of Asmund Karasun, *ca.* AD 1050.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE RUNES

A King he was on a carven throne
In many-pillared halls of stone
With golden roof and silver floor,
And runes of power upon the door.

J.R.R.Tolkien
The Fellowship of the Ring

Runes and charms are very practical formulae designed to produce definite results, such as getting a cow out of a bog.

T.S.Eliot
The Music of Poetry

The purpose of this book is to reintroduce an ancient Oracle, the Runes. Older than the New Testament, the Runes have lain fallow for more than 300 years. Akin in function to the Tarot and the Chinese *Book of Changes*, the Runes were last in current use in Iceland during the late Middle Ages. In their time they served as the *I Ching* of the Vikings.

The wisdom of the Rune Masters died with them. Nothing remains but the sagas, the far-flung fragments

of runic lore and the Runes themselves. In his book, *Runes: An Introduction*, Ralph W. V. Elliott writes of:

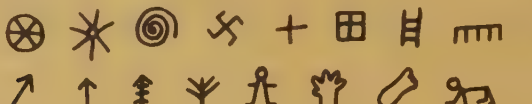
> strange symbols scratched into ancient tools and weapons now lying idle in some museum showcase; names of warriors, secret spells, even snatches of songs, appearing on objects as diverse as minute silver coins and towering stone crosses, scattered in the unlikeliest places from Yugoslavia to Orkney, from Greenland to Greece. *

The influence of the Runes on their time was incontestable. Elliot notes that when the high chieftains and wise counsellors of Anglo-Saxon England met in conclave, they called their secret deliberations 'runes', and that when Bishop Wulfila made his translation of the Bible into fourth-century Gothic, he rendered St Mark's 'the mystery of the kingdom of God' (Mark 4:11) using *runa* for 'mystery'. Eight centuries earlier, when Herodotus traveled around the Black Sea, he encountered descendants of Scythian tribesmen who crawled under blankets, smoked themselves into a stupor (a practice still encountered even today in the Caucasus Mountains), and then cast sticks in the air and 'read' them when they fell. Although these tribesmen were preliterate, their sticks would probably qualify as Runes.

There is no firm agreement among scholars as to where and when runic writing first made its appearance in

*Ralph W.V. Elliot, *Runes: An Introduction* Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1959, p.1.

Western Europe.* Before the Germanic peoples possessed any form of script, they used pictorial symbols that they scratched into rocks. Especially common in Sweden, these prehistoric rock carvings or *hällristningar* are dated from the second Bronze Age (*ca.* 1300 BC), and were probably linked to Indo-European fertility and sun cults. The carvings include representations of men and animals, parts of the human body, weapon motifs, sun symbols, the swastika and variations on square and circular forms. Here are some examples:



Elliott suggests an amalgamation of two separate traditions: 'the alphabetic script on the one hand, the symbolic content on the other... The practice of sortilege (divination) was cultivated among Northern Italic as well as Germanic peoples, the one using letters, the other pictorial symbols.'* Numerous *hällristningar*, as well as the runic standing stones, can still be seen in Germany and throughout Scandinavia today.

It is difficult for us to imagine the immense powers bestowed on the few who became skilled in the use of symbolic markings or glyphs to convey thought. Those first glyphs were called *runes*, from the Gothic *runa*,

*Elliot writes: 'All we know then is that in some Germanic tribe some man had both the leisure (a factor often forgotten) and the remarkable phonetic sense to catch the *futhark* (alphabetic script) from a North Italic model known to him somewhere in the alpine regions in the period *c.* 250-150 B.C.' Op. cit., p.11.

* Elliott, op. cit., pp. 64-5

meaning 'a secret thing, a mystery'. The runic letter or *runastafr* became a repository for intuitions that were enriched according to the skill of the practitioner of *runemal*, the art of Rune casting.

From the beginning, the Runes took on a ritual function, serving for the casting of lots, for divination and to evoke higher powers that could influence the lives and fortunes of the people. The craft of the Rune Masters and Mistresses touched every aspect of life, from the most sacred to the most practical. There were Runes and spells to influence the weather, the tides, crops, love, healing; Runes of fertility, cursing and removing curses, birth and death. Runes were carved on amulets, drinking cups, battle spears, over the lintels of dwellings and onto the prows of Viking ships.

The Rune Masters of the Teutons and Vikings wore startling garb that made them easily recognizable. Honoured, welcomed, feared, these shamans were familiar figures in tribal circles. There is evidence that a fair number of runic practitioners were women. The anonymous author of the thirteenth-century *Saga of Erik the Red* provided a vivid decription of a contemporary mistress of runecraft:

> She wore a cloak set with stones along the hem. Around her neck and covering her head she wore a hood lined with white catskins. In one hand she carried a staff with a knob on the end and at her belt, holding together her long dress, hung a charm pouch.

In pre-Christian eyes, the earth and all created things were alive. Twigs and stones served for runic divination

since, as natural objects, they embodied sacred powers. Runic symbols were carved into pieces of hardwood, incised on metal or cut into leather that was then stained with pigment into which human blood was sometimes mixed to enhance the potency of the spell. The most common Runes were smooth flat pebbles with symbols or glyphs painted on one side. The Rune Mistress would shake her pouch and scatter the pebbles onto the ground; those falling with glyphs upward were then interpreted.

The most explicit surviving description of a similar procedure is much older and comes from the Roman historian Tacitus. Writing in AD 98 about practices prevalent among the Germanic tribes, he reports:

> To divination and casting of lots they pay attention beyond any other people. Their method of casting lots is a simple one: they cut a branch from a fruit-bearing tree and divide it into small pieces which they mark with certain distinctive signs (*Notae*) and scatter at random onto a white cloth. Then, the priest of the community, if the lots are consulted publicly, or the father of the family, if it is done privately, after invoking the gods and with eyes raised to heaven, picks up three pieces, one at a time, and interprets them according to the signs previously marked upon them.
> (*Germania*, ch. X)

By Tacitus' time, the Runes were already becoming widely known on the Continent, carried from place to place by traders, adventurers and warriors and, eventually, by Anglo-Saxon missionaries. For this to happen, a common alphabet was required – the alphabet that

became known as *futhark* after its first six letters or glyphs:

f u th a r k

Although later Anglo-Saxon alphabets expanded to include as many as thirty-three letters in Britain, the traditional Germanic futhark is comprised of twenty-four Runes. These were divided into three 'families' of eight Runes, three and eight being numbers credited with special magical potency. The three groups, known as *aettir*, were named for the Norse gods *Freyr*,*Hagal* and *Tyr*. The three *aettir* are:

Freyr's Eight:

Hagal's Eight:

Tyr's Eight:

It is with these twenty-four Runes, plus one later innovation, a Blank Rune, that *The Book of Runes* is concerned.

THE RUNE OF HOSPITALITY

I saw a stranger yestereen;
I put food in the eating place,
Drink in the drinking place,
Music in the listening place;
And in the sacred names of the Triune
He blessed me in my house,
My cattle and my dear ones.
And the lark said in her song:
Often, often, often,
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise:
Often, often, often,
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.

From the Gaelic

Christ figure, Jaellinge, Denmark,
ca. AD 980

THE ORACLE OF THE SELF

oracle, from the Latin oraculum, *divine announcement ... 1, among the ancient Greeks and Romans, a) the place where, or medium by which, deities were consulted; b) the revelation or response of a medium or priest; 2.a) any person or agency believed to be in communication with a diety: b) any person of great knowledge or wisdom: c) opinions or statements of any such oracle: 3) the holy of holies of the ancient Jewish Temple.*

Webster's New World Dictionary

And the oracle be prepared in the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

1 Kings 6:19

When I began to work with the Runes, I had never seen a runic text, so I did not realize that I was breaking away from traditional sequence of *Freyr, Hagal* and *Tyr* probably used by the early practitioners of *runemal*. But function determines form, use confers meaning, and an Oracle always resonates to the requirements of the time in which it is consulted. I had to rely on the Runes themselves to establish their own order and to instruct me in their meanings.

The Rune stones I was working with had come to me in England in 1976: tiny brown rectangles hardly bigger

than my thumbnail, with the glyphs scratched into the surfaces. The woman who made them lived in Trindles Road, Redhill, Surrey. She hadn't glazed her Runes, merely baked them in her oven like bisquits.

Along with this set of Runes came two Xeroxed sheets giving the glyphs their approximate English meaning and a brief interpretation for each Rune when 'Upright' or 'Reversed'. To the twenty-four futhark Runes had been added a Blank Rune represented as 'The path of karma: that which is predestined and cannot be avoided. Matters hidden by the Gods.' There were no instructions for using the Runes and, after a few days, the Trindles Road Runes went onto a shelf.

But I kept the Runes and took them back to the United States. Several years passed before I happened upon them again. I was alone on my Connecticut farm. It was a warm summer evening and I couldn't sleep, so I went to my study and began rearranging books. And there, in their little chamois bag, were the Runes.

I spilled them out onto my desk. As I moved the stones around, I experienced the same pleasurable feeling as I had when I first handled them in England. It was then that it occurred to me to ask the Runes how they were to be employed. I sat quietly for a time, composing myself, and said a prayer. I opened my Oracle Journal, the notebook in which I recorded readings from the *I Ching*, and wrote out my question: 'In what order do you wish to be arranged?' I noted the time 10:55 and the date, June 21st – the moment of the summer solstice.

I spread out the Runes, blank sides up, and moved them around, touching each Rune. Then one by one, I

turned them over, aligning them in front of me in three rows. It took only a few moments. When I was done, I sat and studied the arrangement:

I remembered my first feeling was dismay that the Blank Rune, the Rune of the Unknown, had not positioned itself more dramatically, rather than simply taking its place among the rest. And I got an eerie feeling: the woman in England had said the Runes could read *from right to left**. Seen that way, the sequence began with what I now regard as the Rune of 'The Self,' and ended with the Blank Rune, the Rune that signals the presence of the Divine in our lives.

It was while I sat gazing at the Rune of The Self' that these words came to me:

> *The starting point is the self. Its essence is water. Only Clarity willingness to change, is effective now...*

I moved to my typewriter and started to write. The Viking Runes had begun their teaching.

* The Runes could face either way and be read from left or right or, on occasion, vertically. Some inscriptions even read *boustrophedon*, a Swedish word, meaning in the manner in which a field is ploughed. See illustration on page 30.

I worked on through the night, taking each Rune in my hand, just sitting with it, meditating on it, copying down what came to me. Now and then, when the flow dwindled, I turned to the *I Ching* and asked for a hexagram that revealed the essence of a particular Rune. The spirit of some of those readings is incorporated here into the interpretations of the Viking Runes between pages 58 and 107. By the time I had completed the interpretation of the Blank Rune, the sun was rising.

Since that night, I have read a great deal about the Runes and their history, the controversies over their origins, the speculations concerning their use. Only one thing is certain: beyond all the efforts of scholars to encompass them, the Runes remain elusive, for they are Odin's gift, and sacred.

Odin is the principal divinity in the pantheon of Norse gods. His name derives from the Old Norse for 'wind' and 'spirit', and it was through his passion, his transforming sacrifice of the self, that Odin brought us the Runes. According to legend, he hung for nine nights on the *Yggdrasil*, the Tree of the World, wounded by his own blade, tormented by hunger, thirst and pain, unaided and alone until, before he fell, he spied the Runes and, with a last tremendous effort, seized them. In *The Poetic Edda*, Odin, the great Rune Master, speaks across the centuries. Hear Odin now:

Do you know how to cut them, know how to stain them,
Know how to read them, how to understand?
Do you know how to evoke them, know how to send them,
Know how to offer, know how to ask?

It is better not to offer than to offer too much for
a gift demands a gift,
Better not to slay than to slay too many.
Thus did Odin speak before the earth began when he
rose up in after time.

These runes I know, unknown to kings' wives
Or any earthly man. 'Help' one is called,
For help is its gift, and helped you will be
In sickness and care and sorrow.

Another I know, which all will need
Who would study leechcraft.
On the bark scratch them, on the bole of trees
Whose boughs bend to the east.

I know a third –
If my need be great in battle
It dulls the swards of deadly foes,
Neither wiles nor Weapons wound me
And I go all unscathed.

So begins the sacred history of the Runes.

The motto for the Runes could be the same words that were carved above the gate of the Oracle at Delphi: Know thyself. The Runes are a teacher. Yet for some it may be more comfortable to approach the Runes in a spirit of play. Oracles are sacred games, instruments for serious or high play, and the value of play is that it frees us from the effort of learning, frees us to learn as children learn. *The Book of Runes* is offered as a primer for oracular play.

Each of us is an Oracle, and when we pray, we are exercising our true oracular function, which is to consult

the Higher Self within. Consulting the Runes will put you in touch with your own inner guidance, with the part of you that knows everything you need to know for your life now.

If there is one prominent modern authority for the efficacy of Oracles, it is the Swiss psychologist, Carl Jung, who affirmed that 'Theoretical considerations of cause and effect often look pale and dusty in comparison to the practical results of chance.'* This means that nothing is too insignificant to be regarded as a clue to guide us in right and timely action. Consulting an Oracle places you in true present time because whatever happens in the given moment possesses what Jung calls 'the quality peculiar to that moment.'

Experiencing a true present is something most of us find extremely difficult. We waste a good part of our lives dwelling on past regrets and fantasizing future disasters. In my own life, when I jog or drive long distances, I am often busy reviewing ideas, sorting schemes, going over options and opportunities. Suddenly I catch myself; I realize that miles of countryside have slipped by unseen, that I am not aware of breathing the air, not aware of the trees, the breeze, the ruts in the pavement. Nowadays, I catch myself more and more frequently, which is a beginning. The 'roof-brain chatter' is slowly being replaced with a stillness that keeps me in the *now*. Once the momentum is broken, the habit will soon wither. I have only to remember: *In the spiritual life, I am always at the beginning*. Remembering this helps us to

* C.G. Jung, Foreword to the *I Ching*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1950.

overcome our addiction to 'getting ahead'. For when we experience a true present, this is where everything happens.

Consulting the Runes enables you to bypass the strictures of reason, the fetters of conditioning and the momentum of habit.* For the brief span of interacting with the Runes you are declaring a free zone in which your life is malleable, vulnerable, open to transformation. We are living in an age of radical discontinuity. The lessons come faster and faster as our souls and the universe push us into new growth. Familiar waters seem suddenly perilous, alive with uncharted shoals and shifting sandbars. The old maps are outdated; we require new navigational aids. And the inescapable fact is *you are your own cartographer now*. Just as the Vikings used the information provided by the Rune Masters to navigate their ships under cloudy skies, so now you can use the Runes to modify your own life course. A shift of a few degrees at the beginning of any voyage will mean a vastly different position far out to sea.

Rune casting is high adventure. It means taking the wheel of life in your hands and owning your power. The new maps, unlike the old, are three-dimensional, and the third dimension is spirit. Whatever the Runes may be – intercessors for the the self with the Self, simultaneous translators between the Self and the Divine, an ageless navigational aid – the energy that engages them is our

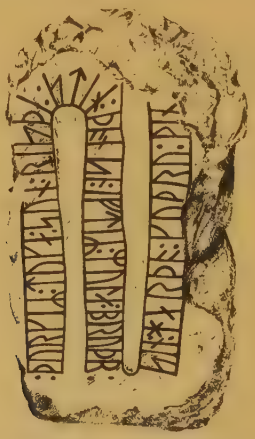
* As Brugh Joy reminds us in his useful guidebook, *Joy's Way: A Map for the Transitional Journey*, there are three sets of mental fetters to give up if you want to be truly free: judging, comparing and needing to know why. The 'why' inevitably becomes clear as you progress in your passage.

own and, ultimately, the wisdom as well. Thus, as we start to make contact with our Knowing Selves, we will begin to hear messages of profound beauty and true usefulness. For like snowflakes and fingerprints, each of our oracular signatures is a one-of-a-kind aspect of Creation addressing its own.

CREDO

The truth is that life is hard and dangerous;that he who seeks his own happiness does not find it; that he who is weak must suffer; that he who demands love, will be disappointed; that he who is greedy, will not be fed; that he who seeks peace,will find strife; that truth is only for the brave; that joy is only for him who does not fear to be alone; that life is only for the one who is not afraid to die.

Joyce Carey



Boustrophedon script on stone
near Asferg, Sweden

CONSULTING THE ORACLE

The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new Landscapes but in having new eyes.

Marcel Proust

Lord, grant me weak eyes for things that are of no account and strong eyes for all thy truth

Søren Kierkegaard

We walk by faith and not by sight

St Paul

Once you start exploring the world of Runes, you will discover that many people have developed their own form of personal Rune casting. I know a black man who works the boardwalk in Venice, California. He sits on an old sheet on which he has painted the rainbow circles of a bull's-eye. He has a bag of stones and shells and twigs, and when you have posed your question he scatters his Runes and reads from their spread. I have met people who work with sand dollars (sea urchin shells), bits of bone, stones upon which they have scratched their own

symbols. I even know a woman who has discovered that inside of the sea urchin's shell can be 'read' effectively and employs a series of such shells for counselling. All of these contemporary Oracles, however homespun, are consistent with ancient traditions such as early Chinese practise of reading oracle bones or the cracks that appear on tortoise shells when heated in a fire – and with the practice of *runemal* itself.

Then there is what one of my friends calls 'Noah's Webster's Oracle.' He merely opens the dictionary at random, taking his counsel from the words to which his finger points. At one moment, while working intensively on this book, I was presented with an attractive business opportunity that I felt obliged to pass up; in doing so, I feared I was perhaps missing out and I began to regret my decision. Instead of consulting the Runes on this issue, I opened a dictionary and, without looking, set my finger on the page. The counsel I received came under the words *lay off*, and contained, beneath my finger, the phrases 'mark off boundaries...stop criticizing...minimize risk.' I returned to my manuscript with a clear conscience. Over the years, I have met a number of people who, without any precise knowledge of Oracles, employ the Bible in a similar fashion.

While working with the Runes, I have considered what, at its most basic, constitutes a Rune. At what point is meaning present in a sign or glyph? Have you noticed the Warrior Rune ᛉ or ᛏ on streets? Or the Rune of Opening Up ᚲ ᚲ ᚲ in a series at certain bends on the road? Meaning is clearly present, agreed upon, but hardly oracular in nature – unless, of course, you happen

to be mulling over an issue and see the sign at that moment, and it holds a special message for you.

I had a curious runic encounter in California while I was working on this book. One afternoon, driving to the beach for a counselling session, I took the Las Virgines-Malibu Canyon Road, a beautiful drive across the mountains. Coming out of a bend, I looked across the canyon and there, on the mountainside opposite, someone had painted a Rune the height of a man. There was no question about it – I was looking up at *Algiz* ᛉ, the Rune of Protection. The glyph was painted on the rock face Reversed (upside-down), a call for caution in the runic vocabulary. The artist had enclosed the Rune in a circle so that it appeared like this: ⓨ. It took me a moment to realize that I was seeing a symbol from the antiwar movement of the 1960s. How curious that the protesters had settled on the Rune of Protection quite probably without ever knowing it. I drove on, wondering whether, centuries from now, some graduate student would attempt to prove that the Vikings had actually travelled all the way to Malibu.

CONSULTING THE RUNES FOR YOURSELF

There are people who set aside a special time each day at which to cast the Runes. Others prefer a more ritual approach: lighting a candle, perhaps a stick of incense, taking time to compose themselves.

Some find that a *meditation on the breath* is helpful: simply follow the breath in and out; let the breaths be

long, easy, connected. Set aside all considerations, worries, duties, if only for a moment; you can always get back to them later. You may wish to say a brief prayer, especially if the situation is intense or turbulent.

Focus is important. But if the ordinary business of living intrudes, you can always consult the Runes without formal preparation. Your need is what brings the Runes into play. And always remember, you *are* in the realm of play, even if it is sacred play. The time to consult the Runes is when you have exhausted your own conscious wisdom, or when you are confronted with a situation concerning which you possess limited or incomplete information. If a crisis arises and you have cause to consult your Highest Self without delay, simply focus the issue clearly in your mind, * reach into the Rune bag, make contact with the stones and draw a Rune. As one practitioner of *runemal* put it, 'the right Rune always sticks to my fingers.'

CONSULTING THE RUNES FOR OTHERS

When I cast the Runes for others, I ask that they formulate the matter of concern clearly in their minds but *not* state it aloud. This eliminates any unconscious personal bias in my interpretation of the Runes.

If a friend who lives far away from you could benefit from a Rune reading, the telephone is your ally. Many

* 'Just as in interpreting a dream, one must follow the dream text with utmost exactitude, so in consulting the oracle, one must hold in mind the form of the question put, for this sets a definite limit to the interpretation of the answer.' C.G. Jung, op. cit., p. xxxvi

healers practice healing at a distance – time and space are not relevant in spiritual healing. Rune reading works as well across 8,000 miles as it does face to face.

Should you wish to cast the Runes for another person and cannot ask their permission directly, it is best to ask the Runes whether such action is timely and correct. Ask for a 'Yes' or a 'No' by the simplest method: reach into your bag and draw a Rune. Upright is 'Yes', Reversed 'No'. If you happen to draw one of the nine Runes which read the same Upright as well as Reversed, draw again.

APPROPRIATE ISSUES

An appropriate issue is *anything that relates to timeliness and right conduct*. You might wish counsel on a contemplated change in your way of life, on whether or not it is the proper moment to make a carrier change, sell a business, make an investment, change your place of dwelling, terminate or initiate a relationship – all these and similar concerns are the suitable subjects for a oracular interrogation.

Notice that I use the word *issues* rather than *questions*. For example, a question might be, 'Should I end this relationship?' whereas to state it as an issue, you would say, 'The issue is my relationship now.' Instead of asking, 'Should I accept this new job?' you might say 'The issue is my work.' This small distinction is a crucial one. If you ask a question and the Oracle provides the answer, then your role is a passive one. However, if you present an issue, and the Oracle comments on that issue, this allows you to extract your own answer and take responsibility for

determining what is right action.

The Runes never answer you with a 'Yes' or 'No'. Their counsel is one of preparation and proper conduct so that you may make a clear and conscious decision regarding the issue at hand.

If you don't have a specific issue in mind, and you still feel drawn to consult the Runes, simply ask: *'What do I need to know in my life now?'* The Oracle's reply is invariably nourishing and instructive.

RUNIC OVERRIDE

Occasionally you may find that the counsel you receive doesn't seem to fit the issue posed. When this occurs, consider the possibility that the Runes have tuned into a more significant issue, something you are avoiding, something of which you are not even aware. This *runic override* seems to be an automatic fail-safe device. Similarly, if you find yourself caught between two issues and can't decide which one to address, don't worry, the Runes will select for you by addressing the issue of most immediate concern.

UPRIGHT AND REVERSED READINGS

Nine of the Runes read the same reagrdless of how you draw them from the bag. The other sixteen can be read either Upright or Reversed.

For example, the Rune of Movement, *Ehwaz* Upright looks like this: , Reversed, like this: . The Reversed reading draws attention to aspects of a situation

that might impede movement or to the fact that movement itself might be inappropriate at this time.

It is well to remember that the appearance of a Rune Reversed is not a cause for alarm but merely an indication that care and attention are required for your conduct to be correct. A Reverse reading often signals the presence of an opportunity to challenge some aspect of your life which, until now, you have been unwilling to face.

Whether you draw your Rune Upright or Reversed, it is always a good idea to read *both* aspects, as this will keep you in touch with the shadow side of your nature – that which is not presently being expressed. Reading both aspects of the Rune will help you to become more conscious of the whole picture – the forces of dark and light which combine to make up our natures.

TESTING THE RUNES

The printer who was making up my business cards showed interest in the runic symbols, and when I offered him the bag, he drew *Berkana* , the Rune of Growth and Rebirth. Briefly, I gave him an interpretation. He replaced the Rune in the bag, started to move away, then turned back to me and said, 'Wait let me try something.' He reached into the bag, swirled the Runes around, and drew again. He opened his hand and there was the same Rune. He grinned at me. It took a moment to catch on – he was testing the Oracle! I felt vaguely uneasy, and even slightly shocked. I would never have done such a thing; somehow it's a matter of respect.

In fact, the probability is that if you draw a Rune and

then ask about the same issue even one hour later, you will not receive the same Rune. The world has changed – everything has changed.

ORACULAR CROSS TALK

When you first start working with the Runes, you may want to check them for accuracy, in effect, calibrate them. This can be done through *oracular cross talk* – consulting two different oracular instruments on the same issue. When I began working with the Runes, in order to confirm their responses with those of a known and wise friend, I would often address the same issue to both the *I Ching* and the Runes. Time after time, I found both Oracles to be in resonance, sometimes identical in their symbolic content, often complementary, always a mutual enrichment. Through this process, my confidence in the Runes was confirmed.

MAKING YOUR OWN RUNES

You may wish to make your own set of Runes, imbuing them from the start with your energy, your own spirit. The material you select depends on your taste, artistic preferences and finances. I have cut Runes out of wood and branded the glyphs into them with a wood-burning set. A particularly lovely set of Runes was created for me by a Navajo silversmith for whom I had done a reading. Flat pebbles smoothed by the sea make beautiful Runes.

The first set of Runes I commissioned were made of clay, twice glazed, by potter Norman Aufrichtig of

Brookfield, Connecticut. While making the Viking Runes, he kept a daub of clay from each stone and then formed the blank Rune from these daubs; thus the Blank Rune contained the symbolic stuff of all life's elements.

If you make your own Runes, or make sets for others, let the doing be a meditation. The idea of meditating is a block for many people – including myself. I finally broke free from my anxiety about not being able to meditate conventionally when I heard mythologist Joseph Campbell say that underlining sentences in books was his meditation. Weeding in the garden can be a meditation. So can washing your car. Making your own Runes can be a profound and satisfying experience.

Whether you acquire or create your own set of Runes, it is through touching and employing them with love and respect that you will make them yours.

LENDING YOUR RUNES

Finally, there remains the matter of whether or not to lend your Runes to others. There is no question that with continued use you will invest the Runes with your energy and make them your own. As a result, some people will not feel comfortable in lending their Runes. Others may sometimes lend them and sometimes not.

Lending your Runes is a personal matter. When in doubt simply decide by drawing a Rune from the bag: Upright means 'Yes', Reversed means 'No'. If you happen to draw one of the Runes which means the same Upright and Reversed, draw again. The Runes will help you decide.

THE GREAT INVOCATION

From the point of Light within the mind of God
Let Light stream forth into the minds of men.
Let Light descend on Earth.

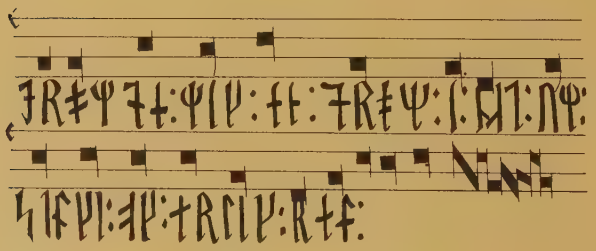
From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let Love stream forth into the hearts of men.
May Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little wills of men –
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.

From the centre which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love Light work out
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power
Restore the Plan on Earth.

Alice Bailey



Bridal song written in Runes, eleventh century

RUNEMAL: THE ART OF RUNE CASTING

Remember, you cannot abandon what you do not know.
To go beyond yourself, you must know yourself.

Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj

Like many games, sacred and secular, the Runes are meant to be 'played' upon a field. The field represents the world that is always coming to be and passing away. You may want to use a special piece of fabric, coloured or white, that you keep for this purpose alone. When you unfold the cloth that serves as your field, that very act can become a silent meditation. My field, a rainbow weaving made for me by a weaver of the Findhorn Community in Scotland, measures 36 centimetres by 46 centimetres and is woven from twenty-two graded hues of silk thread.

My first bag was a found object; purple with a legend stitched on one side announcing that the bag's original contents had been a bottle of Crown Royal Whisky. Someone else drank the whisky; I inherited the bag. I liked that bag because there was plenty of room inside even the largest hand to fit in and rattle the stones about.

But neither bag, nor field needs to be ornate; as the *I Ching* reminds us, 'Even with slender means the sentiments of the heart can be expressed.'

In ancient times a Rune Master would shake the Runes in his pouch, chant an invocation to Odin, requesting that the god be present, and then scatter the stones, drawing his counsel from those that fell glyph-side up. This venerable method seems unwieldy to me; when I employ it, I often find myself compelled to make a coherent interpretation from a dozen or more stones. However, a number of other satisfactory techniques recommend themselves.

In the beginning, whether I was reading for someone else or for myself, I used to spread all the Runes, glyphs down, on the field. Then I or the querist would touch each stone, moving it about or letting the fingers rest lightly upon it for a moment. But there is also something very satisfying about reaching into the bag and choosing the stones. I like feeling the stones click against one another and even more, the way a Rune often seems to insert itself between my fingers.

TECHNIQUES AND SPREADS

There is a variety of methods for casting the Runes. Here are several effective techniques that I recommend.

Odin's Rune

This is the most practical and simple use of the Oracle and consists of drawing one Rune for an overview of an entire situation. That single Rune encompasses the issue,

present conditions and resolution. In spirit, it is the nearest to the Delphic pronouncement of ancient times. This is the 'crux' reading, the Rune of 'Aha! So that's what it's all about.'

Drawing Odin's Rune is particularly helpful under stressful conditions. You may find yourself in a pressure situation, confronted with matters that demand action now, and the truth is *you don't have enough information.* There is no time for spreading cloths, lighting candles, meditating. All you require is your bag of Runes and, if possible, a quiet place.

A friend who is senior corporate executive recently told me that he had suddenly been confronted with a crisis situation which amounted to either taking over the company or resigning. 'I headed for the men's room, clutching my bag of Runes,' he said. 'When I came out, I was on my way to becoming the chief executive officer.' The Rune he had drawn was *Dagaz* ᛞ, the Rune of Breakthrough and Transformation.

Drawing a single Rune is not only valuable under crisis conditions; the technique is useful anytime you want an overview of your situation. On a long drive or the journey between home and work I almost always keep my Runes beside on the seat. Drawing Odin's Rune often shows me the humour in a difficult situation. And why not? God's favourite music is said to be laughter.

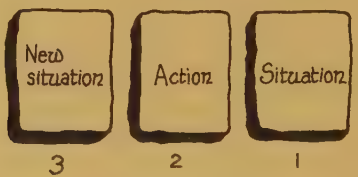
If you are worried about someone who is far away, before you rush to the telephone, focus on the person and draw a Rune. You will receive an instant 'status report'. This technique can be consoling as well as economical.

The Three Rune Spread

The magical number 'three' figures prominently in the divinatory practices of the ancients. *The Three Rune Spread* which, according to Tacitus, was already in use 2,000 years ago, is quite satisfactory for all but most extended and intricate readings.

With an issue clearly in mind, select three Runes, one at a time, and place them in order of selection *from right to left*. To avoid consciously changing the direction of the stones, especially as you become familiar with their symbols, it is preferable to place them blank side up.

Once you have selected the Runes, they will lie before you in this fashion: reading from the right, the first Rune speaks to the *Situation as it is*; the second Rune (centre) suggests the *Course of action called for*; and the third Rune (on the left) indicates the *New situation that will evolve*.



How you happen to turn the stones may alter the direction of the glyphs to either an Upright or Reversed position, but this, too, is part of the process. Since only nine Runes read the same Upright and Reversed, the readings for the other sixteen will depend on how you turn over the stones.

Here is a sample reading. A friend, who came to me for a Rune casting after his wife had left him, was experiencing a great deal of pain, realizing how much the

relationship meant to him and agonizing over his loss. The issue then, was 'What am I to learn from this separation?'

These are the Runes he drew:

We interpreted the Runes in the following manner: reading from the right, the first Rune, *Algiz* ᛉ , the Rune of Protection Reversed, addresses his sense of being totally vulnerable, unprotected. It is a counsel to be mindful that only right action and correct conduct provide protection at such a time; that knowledge is his protection. He must learn and grow from what has happened. The second Rune, *Kano* ᚲ , is the Rune of Opening Up. Trust the process, this Rune is saying; he can now see things in their true light, see what in his old conditioning must go. Third came *Nauthiz* ᚾ , the Rune of Constraint and Pain. The growth to be undertaken will not be free of anguish. His wife's departure will enable him to undertake serious work on himself, and he is to remain mindful that rectification must come before progress.

To sum up, the three Runes were saying, though he is feeling vulnerable and exposed, with the pain comes the necessary clarity to get on with self-change; and as he progresses, he is advised to consider the positive uses of adversity. Despite the Reversed Rune and the pain

involved, I felt – and so did he – that this was a positive and encouraging reading.

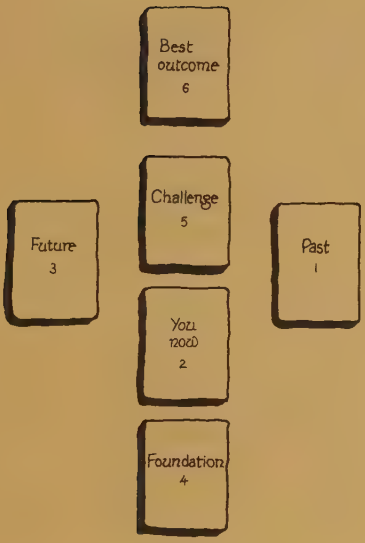
A Second Three Rune Spread

There is another useful method of interpreting the Three Rune Spread, particularly when the issue is one of Blockage in your life. In this interpretation, the first Rune you draw represents *You now*, where you are in your passage. The second or centre Rune is the *Challenge*, or whatever is blocking you from reaching your goal. The third Rune stands for the *Best possible outcome* of the situation after you have successfully met the challenge.

If you decide upon this method of interpretation, do so in advance. In most cases, the Runes drawn will not be identical with those you get from employing the 'three stages' reading of *Situation as it is, Course of action called for, New situation evolving*, as demonstrated on page 44.

The Runic Cross

Employ this spread when you want a more complete picture of any situation and its dynamics. This layout, inspired by the Tarot, calls for selecting six Runes, which are set out in the form of a Runic or Celtic Cross. The order of placing the runes is as follows:



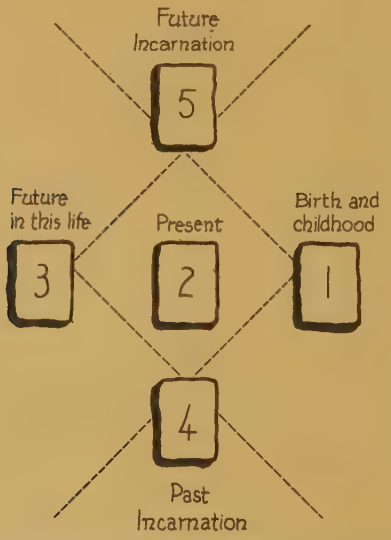
The first Rune represents the *Past*, that from which you are coming, what lies directly behind you. The second Rune represents *You now*. The third, or *Future* Rune, stands for what lies ahead of you, what is coming into being. The fourth Rune gives the *Foundation* of the matter under consideration, the unconscious elements and archetypal forces involved. The fifth or *Challenge* Rune tells you the nature of the obstacles in your path. The final or *Best outcome* Rune sugggests the best the best result you can anticipate.

As a considerable amount of information is contained in the Runic Cross, this spread often provides the incentive for deep thought and reflection. If, after laying

out and considering these six Runes, you still lack clarity, replace all the Runes in their bag and draw a single Rune. The seventh Rune, the *Rune of Resolution*, will give you the essence of the situation.

The Three Lifetimes Spread

This spread is for those who wish to experiment with the notion of reincarnation. It furnishes a three level perspective on your passage, and is laid out in the form of the Rune of Fertility, *Inguz* ᛜ . The Runes represent (in order of casting): (1) *Birth and childhood conditions*, (2) *Your present situation*, (3) *Future in this life*, (4) *Past incarnation* and (5) *Future incarnation*. The Runes are placed in the following manner:



The Three Lifetimes Spread should not be undertaken

lightly or in a state of agitation. This spread provides you with information about what you still need to deal with from your past so that you can change your present situation, thus affecting both your future in this life and your next incarnation.*

The first reading I undertook with the Three Lifetimes Spread was on my own account. This was the outcome.

Birth and Childhood Conditions (1) informs me that I came into this life needing to learn to relate rightly to *Nauthiz*, the Rune of Constraint and Pain ᚾ ; that I must learn to work with the 'shadow' areas in myself, the areas of stunted growth, weaknesses I project negatively onto others. I was thus put on notice that I could expect holdups and setbacks until I had rectified the imbalances in my nature. My *Present Situation* (2) is signified by *Jera*, the Rune of Beneficial Outcomes ᛃ , a span of time leading to Harvest, during which I must exercise patience and cultivate my nature with care. My *Future in this Life* (3) is represented by *Sowelu*, the Rune of Wholeness, Life Force ᛋ , the impulse toward self-

* Lifetimes are not necessarily sequential. The lifetime closest to you *karmically*, the lifetime influencing your passage now, may not be the last one lived. While time, as we perceive it, is a linear experience, such is not necessarily the case in Eternity.

realization and regeneration, the recognition of something long denied, and the attendant warning not to give myself airs. *Dagaz*, the Rune for Transformation , stands in the *Past Incarnation* (4) position, indicating a major breakthrough as the ground from which this present lifetime passage springs. A tremendously positive Rune with assured outcome and renewed growth as its features, it indicates that I had done considerable hard work that time around. And finally, the *Future Incarnation* (5) is represented by *Eihwaz*, the Rune of Avertive Powers and Defence , an indication that the power I am funding in this lifetime passage, the tests that I am undergoing, will enable me to avoid blockage and to continue my growth the next time around.

Rune Poker

This game can be played with utmost pleasure and profit by two or more people who truly care for each other. It can also be played with profit by you and your worst enemy. Since the Runes make information available from the subconscious, Rune Poker is a potent tool for finding out and understanding more about each other.

In Rune Poker there is no 'winner'. The game focuses on whatever issue people want to examine and play continues until such time as that issue seems adequately clarified to all players. If possible, each player should have a set of Runes, although one set will suffice. If only one bag is used, however, the dynamics of the game are altered significantly.

Select three Runes from your bag and place them in front of you, glyph-side down. The first player turns over

a Rune and interprets it as it relates him to the issue decided upon. Now the next player turns over her Rune, gives her interpretation, and then has the option of relating it to the previous Rune. The third player turns over his Rune, gives his interpretation, and, if he wishes, comments on the two previous Runes. When the first round is completed, repeat the process for the second and third rounds. You may wish to play a final round in which each of the players, in turn, tells what new insights have come to them concerning the issue.

Rune Poker can be played by a close-knit group of colleagues or associates working on a project. Say you are doing research and development on a new invention and the process is blocked. Three or four of you may want to declare a poker break. A variation on the three Rune progression might be useful in such a situation: *You now* (first round), *Your part in the blockage* (second round), and *Remedy* (third round). The game swiftly takes on strategic and therapeutic overtones. Everyone will learn as much as he or she can handle, and there will be no lack of humour along the way.

For more intimate issues, two-handed Rune Poker can be illuminating. Any two people can play this game when some issue calls for clarification. The number of Runes you choose is up to you. If the situation is particularly sensitive, in order to keep friction at a minimum, you may decide not to comment on one another's Runes. Here is a sample reading.

A couple whose relationship was in jeopardy decided to play a game of Rune poker. She played *Laguz* Reversed , the Rune of Water, Flow, That Which Conducts,

interpreting it as a statement to the man to get in touch with his intuitive self if he hopes to understand her. He played *Raido* ᚱ , the Rune of Journey, Communication, Union and Reunion, which he saw as evidence of his willingness to keep on removing resistances, regulating excesses. On the second round, she played *Hagalaz* ᚺ , the Rune of Disruptive Natural Forces, Elemental Power, indicating an urge for freedom, a warning that she is waking up to herself and will, if necessary, sacrifice security and relationships in order to grow. He played *Uruz* ᚢ , the Rune of Strength, Manhood, an indication that he too is going through a transition – reclaiming part of himself, a part he has been living out through another, possibly her. As they continued to play, they became conscious of the fact that they were both in a period of accelerated self-change and needed to make an effort to hear each other more clearly.

Watching a hand develop can be most revealing although not, on every occasion, free of discomfort. But then, true growth rarely is.

The Cycle of Self-Transformation

Thirteen of the twenty-five Runes focus directly on the mechanism of self-change. You may find it useful to watch for the thirteen as you cast your Runes since, taken together, they comprise a *Cycle of Self-Transformation*. These Runes make up an energy framework within the body of the runic alphabet; a supporting armature, so to speak, facilitating and sustaining the process of self-change and transformation.

The thirteen are: (3) *Ansuz*, Signals, the Messenger

Rune; (4) *Othila*, Separation, Retreat, Inheritance; (5) *Uruz*, Strength, Manhood/Womanhood; (6) *Perth*, Initiation, Something Hidden; (7) *Nauthiz*, Constraint, Necessity, Pain; (8) *Inguz*, Fertility, New Beginnings; (14) *Kano*, Opening, Fire; (16) *Berkana*, Growth, Rebirth; (17) *Ehwaz*, Movement, Progress; (19) *Hagalaz*, Disruptive Natural Forces, Elemental Power; (20) *Raido*, Communication, Union, Reunion; (21) *Thurisaz* Gateway, Place of Non-Action; (22) *Dagaz*, Breakthrough, Transformation.

In the first printing of this book, I indentified all thirteen, yet miscounted when explaining about the Cycle of Self-Transformation and, as a result, listed only twelve. The omitted Rune was *Kano*. By its 'light' we are assisted in opening ourselves up, in identifying old habits or an old way of life that is invalidated by new growth. In retrospect, it strikes me as curious if not downright significant that I should have consigned that particular Rune to the darkness.

Finally, from my experience of many Rune readings, I find that whenever two or more of the thirteen Cycle Runes appear side-by-side in a spread, the potential for growth and integration is greatly enhanced.

Keeping a Rune Journal

As you establish your practice of consulting the Runes, you may find it profitable to log your issues and the guidance you receive. Since first beginning to work with the Runes, I have marked down the particular stones cast and a brief interpretation in my Rune Journal. I also note the time, date, and occasionally, the prevailing condi-

tions in my life at the moment. Keeping such a journal allows you to observe the quality of your progress as you work with the Runes.

A technique which Dr Allan W. Anderson of San Diego State University suggests to students of the *I Ching* is equally valid for those who work with the Runes. He calls it 'The Rule of Right Action.' Each morning consult the Oracle to determine your Rule of Right Action for the day. You may wish to use either a Three Rune Spread or Odin's Rune. The reading you receive amounts to a personal 'weather forecast' for your day. Sometimes, when it has been a particularly trying or exhilarating day, you may wish to consult the Oracle again in the evening for an evaluation of how you've conducted yourself. If the idea of asking for a daily Rule seems excessive, try it on a weekly basis. Consult the Runes on Monday for the week's Rule, and again on Sunday night for your evaluation. Or take a monthly reading. It all depends on whether you prefer a close-up, medium or long-range view of your life.

Recording these readings in your Rune Journal will help you to become more familiar with the Runes and their symbolism and, at the same time, will enable you to see the relevance and accuracy of the Oracle as a guide to self-change.

As you become familiar with the Runes, you will no doubt discover new and creative ways to utilize them. The Viking Runes, ancient as they are, remain an open-ended system with a future probably longer than its past. Enjoy your Runes, play with them, let them speak to you.

A WARRIOR'S CREED

I have no parents: I make the heavens and earth my parents.
I have no home: I make awareness my home.
I have no life or death: I make the tides of breathing my life and death.
I have no divine power: I make honesty my divine power.
I have no means: I make understanding my means.
I have no magic secrets: I make character my magic secret.
I have no body: I make endurance my body.
I have no eyes: I make the flash of lightning my eyes.
I have no ears: I make sensibility my ears.
I have no limbs: I make promptness my limbs.
I have no strategy: I make 'unshadowed by thought' my strategy.
I have no designs: I make 'seizing opportunity by the forelock' my design.
I have no miracles: I make right-action my miracles.
I have no principles: I make adaptability to all circumstances my principles.
I have no tactics: I make emptiness and fullness my tactics.
I have no talents: I make ready wit my talent.
I have no friends: I make my mind my friend.
I have no enemy: I make carelessness my enemy.
I have no armour: I make benevolence and righteousness my armour.
I have no castle: I make immovable-mind my castle.
I have no sword: I make absence of self my sword.

Anonymous Samurai, fourteenth century

INTERPRETING THE RUNES

The seed of God is in us... Pear seeds grow into pear trees, hazel seeds into hazel trees, and God seeds into God.

Meister Eckhart

The final part of this book is devoted to the interpretations of the Rune stones. I am passing on the gift of this knowledge to you in the sure hope that it will enrich your life as it has mine.

In approaching an ancient mystery a surrender is required. As poet Robert Bly said, 'There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.'

In my mind there is an image which recurs from time to time. I see a vast misty field containing some Stonehenge that did not survive. It lies within view of a glacier, this field, high above the mouth of a wild fjord. As I watch out of the mists emerge the massive weathered stones, blossoming with yellow lichen. There is something military about the way they stand in ranks to form their constellation. At the same time, a powerful sense of the sacred invests the scene. Above the rustle of feather

grass, the deeply carved glyph in each stone seems to pulse and vibrate. And at the very centre touched by the sun's first rays, stands a blank and solitary stone: *both pregnant and empty, arbiter of all that is coming to be and passing away...* These stones are the markers left by Spiritual Warriors, the servants of civilization.

The praying voices of the Old Ones are silent. Three hundred years have passed. No doubt those voices have whispered to others as they whispered to me. It remains for us to honour our own natures and trust the Knowing Self within.

Contemplating the Runes is a process by which we may grow in clarity, in stillness, in being at one with the Self. To that end, a single question, a simple prayer, will always suffice: *show me what I need to know for my life now.*

What follows is what the Runes taught me about themselves.

1 The Self

Mannaz

The starting point is the self. Its essence is water. Only clarity, willingness to change, are effective now. A correct relationship to yourself is primary, for from it flow all possible correct relationships with others and with the Divine.

Remain modest – that is the Oracle's counsel. Regardless of how great may be your merit, be yielding, devoted and moderate, for then you have true direction for your way of life.

Be in the world but not of it. That is implicit here. And yet do not be closed, narrow or judging. Remain receptive to impulses flowing from the Divine within and without. *Strive to live the ordinary life in a non-ordinary way*. Remember at all times what is coming to be and passing away, and focus on that which abides. Nothing less is called for from you now. This is a time of major growth and rectification and, as a rule, rectification must come before progress.

This is not a time to seek credit for accomplishments or to focus on results. Rather, be content to do your task for the task's sake. This is more a problem for those

whose eyes are always on the goal than it is for those who have not forgotten how to play and can more easily lose themselves in doing the work for its own sake. Herein lies the secret of experiencing a *true present.*

If you take the Rune of the Self and cut it down the middle, you get the Rune for Joy with its mirror image. There is a subtle caution here against carelessness. The dancing acrobatic energy of balancing is called for now – the Self is required to balance the self. *Nothing in excess* was the second phrase written over the gateway to the temple at Delphi. The first counsel was *Know thyself.* With these words, the alphabet of the Viking Runes begins.

Reversed If you feel you are blocked, this Rune urges you to begin by being clear with yourself – facing up, admitting, releasing, whatever it takes. Do not turn to others now, but look inside, in silence, for the enemy of your progress. No matter what area of your life seems to be blocked, stop and reconsider: you will recognize the outer 'enemy' as but a reflection of what you have not, until now, been able or willing to recognize as coming from within.

Above all do not give yourself airs. Breaking the momentum of past habits is a challenge here: in the life of the Spirit you are always at the beginning.

2

Partnership
A Gift

Gebo

Drawing this Rune is an indication that union, uniting or partnership in some form is at hand. But you are put on notice not to collapse yourself into that union. For true partnership can only be achieved by separate and whole beings who retain their separateness even in unity and uniting. Remember to let the winds of Heaven dance between you.

This counsel applies at all levels: in love relationships, in business affairs, in partnering of every kind. It is particularly appropriate when entering into partnership with what some call your Higher Self, while others speak of the interplay between the conscious and the unconscious in each of us. But most of all it is the case when seeking union with the Divine: God always enters into equal partnerships.

Gebo, the Rune of Partnership, has no Reverse for it signifies the gift of freedom from which flow all other gifts.

3 Signals Messenger Rune The God Loki

Ansuz

This is the first of the twelve Runes that make up the Cycle of Self-Transformation – Runes that focus directly upon the mechanism of self-change. The keynote is *receiving:* messages, signals, gifts. Even a timely warning may be seen as a gift. When the Messenger Rune brings sacred knowledge, one is truly blessed.

The message may be that of a new life unfolding. New lives begin with new connections, surprising linkages that direct us into new pathways. Take pains to be especially aware and conscious during meetings, visits, chance encounters, particularly with persons wiser than yourself. A new sense of family solidarity invests *Ansuz*.

Loki is the arch-thief, the ancient trickster dating back to the Indo-European conception of the gods. He is the *heyeohkah* of North American Indian folklore and myth, 'a mocking shadow of the creator god', as well as a culture hero who, like Prometheus, is a bringer of benefits to humankind. Through association with the Norse god Loki, Mercury overshadows this Rune. In mythology, a strange, androgynous figure, keeper of the keys to

knowledge, Mercury carried messages between the gods and between gods and humanity.

This Rune symbolizes the urge to integrate unconscious motive with conscious recognition. Drawing it tells you: connection with the Divine is at hand. For *Ansuz* is a signal to explore the depths, the foundations of life, and to experience the inexhaustible wellspring of the Divine in your nature. You are reminded that you must draw first from the well to nourish and give to yourself. Then there will be more than enough to nourish others.

Reversed You may well be concerned over what appears to be failed communication, lack of clarity or awareness either in your past history or in a present situation. You may feel inhibited from accepting what is offered. A sense of futility, of wasted motion, of a fruitless journey may dismay you. Remember, however, that this is one of the Cycle Runes. What is happening is timely in your process. If the well is clogged, this is the moment for cleaning out the old. Reversed, *Ansuz* is saying: *consider the uses of adversity*.

Separation
Retreat
Inheritance

4

Othila

This is a time of separating paths. Old skins must be shed, outmoded relationships discarded. When this Rune appears in a spread, a peeling away is called for. *Othila* is a Rune of radical severance.

The proper action here is submission and, quite probably, retreat – knowing how and when to retreat and possessing the firmness of will to carry it out.

Property is associated with this Rune, for *Othila* is the Rune of acquisition and benefits. However, the benefits you receive, the 'inheritance,' may be derived from something you must give up. This can be particularly difficult when that which you are called upon to give up or abandon is part of your background, your cultural inheritance. For then you must look closely at what, until now, you have proudly claimed as your birthright. Whether it is your attachment to your position in society, to the work you do or even to your beliefs about your own nature, the separation called for now will free you to become more truly who you are.

Reversed The warning is that you take pains not to be

mechanical or unaware. This is not a time to be bound by old conditioning, old authority. Ask yourself what feels right for you and act according to the Light you possess now in your life. Because you may be called upon to undertake a radical departure from old ways, total honesty is required. Otherwise, through negligence or refusal to see clearly, you may cause pain to others, damage to yourself.

Not rigidity but flow is the proper attitude at this time. And yet you must wait for the universe to act. When you draw this Rune remember: we do without doing, and everything gets done.

Strength 5
Manhood, Womanhood
A Wild Ox

Uruz

The Rune of termination and new beginnings. Drawing it indicates that the life you have been living has outgrown its form, which must die so that life energy can be released in a new birth, a new form. *Uruz* is a Rune of passage and, as such, part of the Cycle of Self-Transformation.

Positive growth and change, however, may involve passage into darkness as part of the cycle of perpetual renewal. As in Nature, the progression consists of five parts: death, decay, fertilization, gestation, rebirth. Events occurring now may well prompt you to undergo a death within yourself. Since self-change is never coerced – we are always free to resist – remain mindful that the new form, the new life, is always greater than the old.

Prepare, then, for opportunity disguised as loss. It could involve the loss of someone or something to which there is an intense emotional bond, and *through* which you are living a part of your life, a part that must be retrieved so you can live it out for yourself. Now, in some way, that bond is being severed, a relationship radically changed, a death experienced. Seek among the ashes and

discover a new perspective and a new birth.

The original symbol for *Uruz* was 'a wild ox' (the aurochs). When the wild ox was domesticated – a nearly impossible task – it could transport heavy loads. Learn to adapt yourself to the demands of such a creative time. Firm principles attach to this Rune, and at the same time humility is called for, since in order to rule you must learn how to serve. This Rune puts you on notice that your soul and the universe support the new growth.

Reversed Without ears to hear and eyes to see, you may fail to take advantage of the moment. The negative result could well be an opportunity missed or the weakening of your position. It may seem that your own strength is being used against you.

For some, this Rune Reversed will serve to alert, providing clues in the form of minor failures and disappointments. For others, those more deeply unconscious or unaware, it should provide a hard jolt. Reversed, it calls for some serious thoughts about the quality of your relationship to your self.

But take heart. Consider the constant cycling of death and rebirth, the endless going and return. Everything we experience has a beginning, a middle, and end, and is followed by a new beginning. Therefore, do not draw back from the passage into darkness. When in deep water, become a diver.

Initiation
Something Hidden
A Secret Matter

6

Perth

A hieratic or mystery Rune pointing to that which is beyond our frail manipulative powers. This Rune is on the side of Heaven, the Unknowable, and has associations with the phoenix, that mystical bird that consumes itself in the fire and then rises from its own ashes. Its ways are secret and hidden.

Deep inner transformational forces are at work here. Yet what is achieved is not easily or readily shared. An integrity is involved that may be masked, disguised or secret. After all, becoming whole, the means of it, is a profound secret.

On the side of the earthly or mundane, there may well be surprises; unexpected gains are not unlikely. On the side of human nature, this Rune is symbolized by the flight of the eagle. Soaring flight, free from entanglement lifting yourself above the endless ebb and flow of ordinary life to acquire broader vision – all this is indicated here. This is the Rune of questing.

Another of the Cycle Runes, *Perth* signifies an intense aspect of initiation. Nothing external matters here, except as it shows you its inner reflection. This Rune is

concerned with the deepest stratum of being, with the bedrock on which your destiny is founded. For some, *Perth* means experiencing a psychic death. If need be, let go of everything, no exceptions, no exclusions. Nothing less than renewal of the Spirit is at stake.

ᛈ **Reversed** A counsel against expecting too much, or expecting in the ordinary way, for the old way has come to an end: you simply cannot repeat the old and not suffer. Reversed, this Rune puts you on notice to call in your scattered energies and concentrate on your own life at this moment, your own requirements for growth. More important, *Perth* counsels you not to focus on outcomes, nor to bind yourself with the memory of past achievements; in so doing, you rob yourself of a *true present*, which is the only time in which self-change can be realized.

You may feel overwhelmed with exhaustion from meeting obstruction upon obstruction in your passage. Yet you always have a choice: you can see all this apparent negativity as 'bad luck' or you can recognize it as an obstacle course, a challenge specific to the initiation you are presently undergoing. Then each setback, each humiliation, becomes a test of character. When your inner being is shifting and reforming on a deep level, patience, constancy and perseverance are called for. So stay centred, see the humour, and carry on regardless.

Constraint
Necessity
Pain

7

Nauthiz

Upright or Reversed, this is a difficult Rune. The necessity of dealing with severe constraint is its lesson. Its positive aspects represent the limitations we directly cause ourselves; its negative side attracts limitations from people around us. Both are equally difficult to handle. The role of *Nauthiz* is to identify our 'shadow' areas, places where growth is stunted, resulting in weaknesses we project negatively onto others. Try not to take this world personally, this Rune is saying: work with the shadow, examine what inside you magnetizes misfortune into your life. When at last you can look upon *Nauthiz* with a smile, you will recognize the troubles, denials and setbacks of life as your guides, teachers and developers.

The need for restraint is unquestionable here. Drawing this Rune puts you on notice that there will be holdups, reasons to reconsider your plans carefully. Only remember: your dissatisfactions are not unreasonable, because there *is* work to be done on your self. So take it on with good will and show perseverance.

This is a time to pay off old debts, to restore, if not harmony, at least balance. So amend, restore, redress:

when fishermen can't go to sea they repair nets. Let the constraints of the time serve you in righting your relationship to your Self. Be mindful that rectification comes before progress. And once again, consider the uses of adversity.

ᚾ **Reversed** As part of the Cycle of Self-Transformation, *Nauthiz* is the great teacher disguised as the bringer of pain and limitation. It has been said that only at the point of greatest darkness do we become aware of the Light within us by which we come to recognize the true creative power of the Self.

When something within us is disowned, that which is disowned wreaks havoc. A cleansing is required here; in undertaking it you fund a will and strengthen character. Begin with what is most difficult and proceed to what is easy. Remember that 'suffering', in its original sense, merely meant 'undergoing'. Thus you are required to undergo the dark side of your passage. To control your anger, to restrain your impulses, to keep your faith firm – all this is at issue here. Modesty and good temper are essential at such a time.

8 Fertility New Beginnings Ing, The Hero-God

Inguz

This Rune is akin to the moon, the intuitive part of our nature, with its urge toward harmonizing and adjusting in the sphere of personal relationships. *Inguz* embodies the need to share, the yearning to be desired, a search after similarities.

The completion of beginnings is what *Inguz* requires. It may mark a time of joyous deliverance, of new life,a new path. A Rune of great power, drawing it means that you now have the strength to achieve completion, resolution, from which comes a new beginning. Above all, completion is crucial here. It may be timely that you complete some project now; if so, make that your first priority. Perhaps a difficult state of mind can be resolved, clarified, turned around. The appearance of this Rune indicates that you must fertilize the ground for your own deliverance.

Inguz signals your emergence from a closed chrysalis state. All things change and we cannot live permanently amid obstructions. As you resolve and clear away the old, you will experience a release from tension and uncertainty.

You may be required to free yourself from a rut, habit or relationship; from some deep cultural pattern, some activity that was quite proper to the self you are leaving behind. The period at or just before birth is often a dangerous one. Movement involves danger. Now is the moment to enter the delivery room.

Another of the Cycle Runes, *Inguz* counsels preparation. Being centred and grounded, freeing yourself from all unwanted influences, and seeing the humour, you are indeed prepared to open yourself to the Will of Heaven, and can await your deliverance with calm certainty.

Defence
Avertive Powers
Yew Tree

9

Eihwaz

As we are tested we fund the power to avert blockage and defeat. At the same time, we develop in ourselves an aversion to the conduct that creates stressful situations in our lives.

There appears to be a blockage in your path, but even a delay may prove beneficial. Do not be overly eager to press forward. This is not a time or situation in which you can make your influence felt. Patience is the counsel *Eihwaz* offers. Nothing hectic, no acting needy or lusting after a desired outcome. This Rune speaks to the difficulties that arise at the beginning of a new life. Often it announces a time of waiting: for a spring to fill up with water, for fruit to ripen on the bough.

Perseverance and foresight are called for here. The ability to foresee consequences before you act is the mark of a profound person. Avert anticipated difficulties through right action. Even more than we are *doers*, we are *deciders*. Once our decision is clear, the doing becomes effortless, for then the universe supports and empowers our action.

Receiving the Rune *Eihwaz*, you are put on notice that

through inconvenience and discomfort, growth is promoted. This may well be a trying time; certainly it is a meaningful one. Set your house in order, tend to business, be clear and wait on the Will of Heaven.

Protection
Sedge or Rushes
An Elk

10

Algiz

Control of the emotions is at issue here. During times of transition, shifts in life course and accelerated selfchange, it is important not to collapse yourself into your emotions – the highs as well as the lows. New opportunities and challenges are typical of this Rune. And with them will come trespasses and unwanted influences.

Algiz serves as a mirror for the Spiritual Warrior, the one whose battle is always with the self. The protection of the Warrior is like the warning rustle of sedge grass, or like the curved horns of the elk, for both serve to keep open space around you. Remain mindful that timely action and correct conduct are the only true protection. If you find yourself feeling pain, observe the pain, stay with it. Don't try to pull the veil down and escape from life by denying what is happening. You *will* progress; knowing that is your protection.

Reversed Be thoughtful about your health, look carefully at all associations you form at this time, and do not add to the burdens others are carrying. If you see fit to become involved with people who are 'using' you, remain

conscious of that fact and take responsibility for your own position; then you can only benefit. Regardless of whether your enterprise prospers or suffers, do not be concerned: you may not win, but you will never lose, for you always learn from what takes place. Temperance and courtesy are the sinews of the Rune's protective powers.

Possessions
Nourishment
Cattle

11

Fehu

Fehu is a Rune of fulfilment: ambition satisfied, rewards received, love fulfilled. It also promises nourishment, from the most worldly to the sacred and Divine. For if the ancient principle 'As above so below' is true, then we are also here to nourish God.

This Rune calls for a deep probing of the meaning of profit and gain in your life. Look with care to know whether it is wealth and possessions you require for your well-being, or rather self-rule and the growth of a will.

Another concern of *Fehu* is with conserving what has already been gained. It urges vigilance and continual mindfulness, especially in times of good fortune, for it is then that we are likely to collapse ourselves into our success on the one hand, or to behave recklessly on the other. Enjoy your good fortune and remember to share it; the mark of a well-nourished self is the ability to nourish others.

Reversed There may be considerable frustration in your life if you draw this Rune Reversed, a wide range of dispossessions reaching from the trivial to the severe: you

fall short in your efforts, you reach out and miss, you get on the wrong train. You may have to sit helplessly by and watch while what you've gained starts to dwindle away. Observe what is happening. Examine the negative events from an open perspective and ask, 'What lesson do I need to learn from this in my life?'

Even if there is occasion for joy, do not be seduced into mindless joyousness. Reversed, *Fehu* indicates that doubtful situations are abundant and come in many forms and guises. You are being put in touch with the shadow side of possessions. Yet all this is part of the coming to be and passing away, and is not that which abides. In dealing with the shadow side of *Fehu*, you have an opportunity to recognize where your true nourishment lies.

Joy
Light

12

Wunjo

This Rune is fruit-bearing branch. The term of travail is ended and you have 'come to yourself' in some regard. The shift that was due has occurred and now you can freely receive its blessings, whether they be in material gain, in your emotional life or in a heightened sense of your own well-being. This is an alchemical moment in which understanding is transmuted from knowledge. The knowledge itself was a necessary but not sufficient condition; now you can rejoice, having been carried across the gap by the Will of Heaven.

Joyousness accompanies new energy, energy blocked before now. Light pierces the clouds and touches the waters just as something lovely emerges from the depths: the soul is illuminated from within, at the meeting place of Heaven and Earth, the meeting of the waters.

There is a new clarity, which may call for you to renounce existing plans, ambitions, goals. It is proper and timely that you submit, for *Wunjo* is a Rune of restoration, of the self properly aligned to the Self.

Reversed Things are slow in coming to fruition. The

process of birth is long and arduous, and fears arise for the safety of the 'child' within. A crisis, a difficult passage – even if brief – is at hand. Consideration and deliberation are called for, because light and shadow are still intermixed and doubts and scruples might interfere with joyousness if not understood as timely to your growth. So stop your anxiety and ask yourself whether you possess the virtues of seriousness, sincerity and emptiness; to possess them is to have tranquility which is the ground for clarity, patience and perseverance.

Seen in its true light, *everything is a test*. And so, focused in the present, sincere toward others and trusting in your process, know that you cannot fail.

This Rune Reversed is a useful meditation.

Harvest
Fertile Season
One Year

13

Jera

A Rune of beneficial outcomes, *Jera* applies to any activity or endeavour to which you are committed. Receiving this Rune encourages you to keep your spirits up. Be aware, however, that no quick results can be expected. A span of time always is involved; hence the key words 'one year', symbolizing a full cycle of time before the reaping, the harvest or deliverance.

You have prepared the ground and planted the seed. Now you must cultivate with care. To those whose labour has a long season, a long coming to term, *Jera* offers encouragement of success. Know that the outcome is in the keeping of Providence and continue to persevere.

Remember the farmer who was so eager to assist his crops that he went out at night and tugged on the new shoots. There is no way to push the river; equally you cannot hasten the harvest. Be mindful that patience is essential for the recognition of your own process which, in its season, leads to the harvest of the self.

14 Opening Fire Torch

Kano

This is the Rune of opening up, of renewed clarity, of dispelling the darkness that has been shrouding some part of your life. You are free now to receive, and to know the joy of non-attached giving.

Kano is the Rune for the morning of activities, for seriousness, clarity and concentration, all of which are essential at the beginning of work. The protection offered by *Kano* is this: the more light you have, the better you can see what is trivial and outmoded in your conditioning.

In relationships, there cannot be a mutual opening up. You may serve as the trigger, the timekeeper, through your awareness that the light of understanding is once again available to you both.

Recognize that, while on the one hand you are limited and dependent, on the other you exist at the perfect centre where the harmonious and beneficent forces of the universe merge and radiate. You *are* that centre.

Simply put, if you have been operating in the dark, there is now enough light to see that the patient on the operating table is yourself.

Reversed Expect a darkening of the light in some situation or relationship. A friendship may be dying, a partnership, a marriage, some aspect of yourself that is no longer appropriate or valid. Receiving this Rune puts you on notice that failure to face up to the death consciously would constitute a loss of opportunity. *Kano* is one of the Cycle Runes. Reversed, it points to the death of a way of life invalidated by growth.

Reversed, this Rune calls for giving up, gladly, the old, and being prepared to live for a time empty; it calls for developing inner stability – not being seduced by the momentum of old ways while waiting for the new to become illuminated in its proper time.

15 Warrior Energy The God Tīw

Teiwaz

This is the Rune of the Spiritual Warrior. Always the battle of the Spiritual Warrior is with the self. Funding a will through action, yet unattached to outcomes, remaining mindful that all you really can do is stay out of your own way and let the Will of Heaven flow through you – these are the hallmarks of the Spiritual Warrior. Embodied in this Rune is the energy of discrimination, the swordlike quality that enables us to cut away the old, the dead, the extraneous. With *Teiwaz* comes certain knowledge that the universe always has the first move. Patience is the virtue of this Rune, and it recalls for us the words of St Augustine that 'The reward of patience is patience.' The moulding of character is the issue when *Teiwaz* appears in your spread.

Here, you are asked to look within, to delve down to the foundations of your life itself. Only in doing so can you hope to deal with the deepest needs of your nature and to tap into your most profound resources. Associated with the Rune are the sun, masculine energy, the active principle. The urge toward conquest is prominent here, especially self-conquest, which is a lifelong pursuit and

calls for awareness, single-mindedness and the willingness to undergo your passage without anxiety and in total trust.

When *Teiwaz* comes in response to an issue of romantic attachment, it indicates that the relationship is both timely and providential. The bond is to a partner with whom you resonate; there is work for you to do together.

If the issue relates to your devotion to a cause, an idea, a path of conduct, the Warrior Rune counsels perseverance, although, at times, the kind of perseverance called for is patience. What are your priorities? How are you using your energy? *Teiwaz* is a Rune of courage and dedication. In ancient times it was the glyph that warriors painted on their shields before battle. Now, with more refined energies in play, the same symbol strengthens your resolve in the struggle of the Self with the self.

Reversed The danger is that through hasty or ill-timed action, energy leaks out or is spilled away. If an association is short-lived, do not grieve, but know that it has fulfilled its span. Matters of trust and confidence are at issue here, and with them the authenticity of your way of being in the world.

This is a Rune of powerful energy. Reversed, *Teiwaz* calls for examining your motives. Is it self-conquest with which you are concerned, or are you trying to dominate another? Are you lusting after outcomes, or are you focused on the task for its own sake?

You will find the answers within yourself, not in outside advice. When you consult the Runes, you are

consulting your Self. This is the action proper to a Spiritual Warrior.

Growth
Rebirth
A Birch Tree

16

Berkana

The Rune of life process, another of the Cycle Runes, *Berkana* denotes that form of fertility which promotes growth both symbolically and actually. The growth may occur in affairs of the world, family matters, one's relationship to one's Self or to the Divine. This is a 'leading to' Rune, in that it leads to blossoming and ripening.

What is called for here is going into things deeply, with care and awareness. *Berkana* is concerned with the power of influencing development and with the flow of beings into their new forms. Its action is gentle and penetrating and pervasive.

First disperse resistance, then accomplish the work. For this to happen, your will must be clear and controlled. In regard to the issue, your motives must be clear and correct. Any dark corners should be cleansed; this must be carried out diligently and sometimes with expert help. Modesty, patience, fairness and generosity are called for here. Once resistance is dispersed and rectification carried out and seen to hold firm, then, through steadfastness and right attitude, the blossoming can occur.

Reversed Events or, more likely, aspects of character, interfere with the growth of new life and life process. You may feel dismay at failing to take right action. But rather than dismay, what is called for here is diligence. Examine what has taken place, your role in it, your needs, the needs of others. Are you placing your *wants* before the *needs* of others? Strip away until you can identify the blocks to growth in this situation. Then, penetrating gently, imitate the wind.

You may be required to fertilize the ground again; but through correct preparation, growth is assured.

Movement
Progress
A Horse

17

Ehwaz

Ehwaz is a Rune of transit, transition and movement; of physical shifts, new dwelling places, new attitudes or new life. It also signifies movement in the sense of improving or bettering any situation.

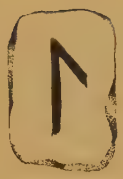
There is about this Rune a sense of gradual development and steady progress, with the accompanying notion of slow growth through numerous shifts and changes. This could apply to the growth of a business or to the development of an idea. A relationship also needs to undergo changes and transformations if it is to maintain growth and life. Personal moral effort and persevering steadfastness are called for when you draw *Ehwaz*.

Let it be said this way: 'As I cultivate my own nature, all else follows.' This Rune's symbol is the horse. From Bronze Age artefacts we find the sun linked to the horse; the horse both symbolized the sun and was regarded as drawing it across the sky. Here, this Rune is saying, you have progressed far enough to feel a measure of safety, of surety in your position. It is time to turn again and face the future reassured and prepared to share the good fortune that comes. The sharing is significant since it

relates to the power of the sun to foster life and illuminate all things with its light.

Reversed Movement that appears to block. Be certain that what you are doing – or not doing – is timely. There are no missed opportunities; we have simply to recognize that not all possibilities are open to us. The opportunity at hand may be precisely to avoid action. If you are feeling at a loss, unclear about the need to act, consider what is timely and appropriate to your nature, and remember: what is yours will come to you.

Flow
Water
That Which Conducts



18

Laguz

Unseen powers are active here, creative and fertile powers of Nature. The attributes of this Rune are water, fluidity, the ebb and flow of tides and emotions, of careers and relationships. *Laguz* fulfills our need to immerse ourselves in the experience of living without having to evaluate or understand. It speaks to the desire for comfort and the satisfaction of emotional needs, to the lunar side of our nature. For while the sun strives for differentiation, the moon draws us toward unity and merging.

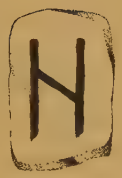
This Rune often signals a time for cleansing: for revaluing, reorganizing, realigning. A Rune of deep knowing, *Laguz* may call you to study spiritual matters in readiness for self-transformation. Success now lies in contacting your intuitive knowing, in attuning to your own rhythms. A Rune of the self relating rightly to the Self, *Laguz* signifies what alchemists called the *conjunctio*, or sacred marriage. In fairy tales, it is the end where the hero and heroine live happily ever after.

Reversed A warning against overreach, excessive striving; a counsel against trying to exceed your own strength

or operate beyond the power you have funded to date in your life.

Laguz Reversed often indicates a failure to draw upon the wisdom of instinct. As a result, the intuitive side of your nature may be languishing, leaving you out of balance. What is called for now is to go within, to honour the receptive side of your Warrior Nature.

Disruptive Natural Forces
Elemental Power
Hail



19

Hagalaz

Change, freedom, invention and liberation are all attributes of this Rune. Drawing it indicates a pressing need within the psyche to break free from constricting identification with material reality and to experience the world of archetypal mind.

The Rune of elemental disruption, of events totally beyond your control, *Hagalaz* has only an upright position, and yet it always operates through reversal. When you draw this Rune, expect disruption of your plans, for it is the great 'Awakener,' although the form the awakening takes may vary. Perhaps you will experience a gradual feeling of coming to your senses, as though you were emerging from a long sleep. Then again, the onset of power may be such as to rip away the fabric of what you previously knew as your reality, your security, your understanding of yourself, your work, your relationships or beliefs.

Be aware, however, that what operates here is not ultimately an outside force, not a situation of you-at-the-mercy-of-externals. Your own nature is creating what's happening, and you are not without power in this

situation. The inner strength you have funded until now in your life is your support and guide at a time when everything you've taken for granted is being challenged.

Receiving this Rune puts you on notice: you may sustain loss or damage – a tree falls on your home, a relationship fails, plans go wrong, a source of supply dries up. But do not be dismayed; you are forewarned and, therefore, encouraged to understand and accept what occurs as necessary for your growth.

There is nothing trivial about this Rune: the more severe the disruption in your life, the more significant and timely the requirements for your growth. Another of the Cycle Runes, the term 'radical discontinuity' best describes the action of *Hagalaz* at its most forceful. The universe and your own soul are demanding that you do, indeed, grow.

Communication
Union, Reunion
A Journey

20

Raido

This Rune is concerned with communication, with the attunement of something that has two sides, two elements, and with the ultimate reunion that comes as the end of the journey, when what is above and what is below are united and of one mind. The journey is the soul's journey. Moreover, the approach of that which is above and that which is below is realized from inmost sentiment rather than through the force of circumstances. A simple prayer for the soul's journey is:

I will to will Thy will

Such a prayer of intention is proper on almost any occasion, and is particularly suitable as a preamble to healing. *Raido* is another of the Runes in the Cycle of Self-Transformation.

Inner worth mounts here, and at such time we must remember that we are not intended to rely entirely upon our own power, but rather to ask what constitutes right action. Ask through prayer, through addressing your own knowing, your body knowing, the Witness Self, the Watcher Within. Once you are clear, you can *neutralize*

your refusal to let right action flow through you. Not intent on movement, be content to wait; while you wait, keep on removing resistances. As the obstructions give way, all remorse arising from 'trying to make it happen' disappears.

As always, the journey is toward self-healing, self-change and union. You are concerned here with nothing less than unobstructed, perfect union. But the union of Heaven and Earth cannot be forced. Keep within your limits. Regulate any excesses in your life. Material advantages must *not* weigh heavily on this journey of the self toward the Self.

Trust your own Process – that is the essence of this Rune. Keep on cutting away illusions. Stand apart even from like-minded others; the notion of strength in numbers does not apply at this time, for this part of the journey cannot be shared. Innermost feeling, spontaneously expressed, is what is called for now. *Raido* urges you to undertake your journey, your quest – and if you have already begun, to continue.

ᚱ **Reversed** Receiving this Rune Reversed puts you on notice to be particularly attentive to personal relationships. At this time, ruptures are more likely than reconciliations. Effort will be required on your part. Keep your good humour; whatever happens, how you respond is up to you.

The requirements of your process may totally disrupt what you had intended. Hoped-for outcomes may elude you. And yet what you regard as detours, inconveniences, disruptions, blockages and even failures and deaths will

actually be *rerouting opportunities*, with union and reunion as the only abiding destinations.

21 Gateway
Place of Non-Action

Thurisaz

With a gateway for its symbol, this Rune indicates that there is work to be done both inside and outside yourself. The gateway is the frontier between Heaven and the mundane. Arriving here is a recognition of your readiness to contact the numinous, the Divine, to illuminate your experience so that its meaning shines clearly through its form.

Thurisaz is a Rune of non-action. Thus the gateway is not to be approached and passed through without contemplation. Here you are being confronted with a true reflection of what is hidden in yourself, what must be exposed and examined before successful action can be undertaken. This Rune strengthens your ability to wait: now is not the time to make decisions. Deep transformational forces are at work in this next-to-last of the Cycle Runes.

Visualize yourself standing before a gateway on a hilltop. Your entire life lies out behind you and below. Before you step through, pause and review the past: the learning and the joys, the victories and the sorrows – everything it took to bring you here. Observe it all, bless

it all, and release it all. For in letting go of the past you reclaim your power.

Step through the gateway now.

Reversed A quickening of your development is indicated here. Yet even when the growth process accelerates, you will have reason to halt along the way, to reconsider the old, to integrate the new. Take advantage of these halts.

If you are undergoing difficulties, remember: the quality of your passage depends upon your attitude. Be certain that you are not suffering over your suffering.

Drawing *Thurisaz* Reversed demands contemplation on your part. Hasty decisions at this time may cause regrets, for the probability is that you will act from weakness, deceive yourself about your motives and create new problems more severe than those you are attempting to resolve. Impulses must be tempered by thought for correct procedure. *Do not attempt to go beyond where you haven't yet begun.* Be still, collect yourself and wait on the Will of Heaven.

22 Breakthrough Transformation Day

Dagaz

Here is the final Rune belonging to the Cycle of Self-Transformation. Drawing *Dagaz* marks a major shift or breakthrough in the process of self-change, a complete transformation in attitude – a 180-degree turn. For some, the transition is so radical that they no longer continue to live the ordinary life in the ordinary way.

Because the timing is right, the outcome is assured although not, from the present vantage point, predictable. In each life there comes at least one moment which, if recognized and seized, transforms the course of that life forever. Rely, therefore, on radical trust, even though the moment may call for you to leap, empty-handed, into the void. With this Rune your Warrior Nature reveals itself.

If *Dagaz* is followed by the Blank Rune, the magnitude of the transformation might be so total as to portend a death, the successful conclusion to your passage.

A major period of achievement and prosperity is sometimes introduced by this Rune. The darkness is behind you; daylight has come. However, as always, you are put on notice not to collapse yourself into the future

or to behave recklessly in your new situation. A lot of hard work can be involved in a time of transformation. Undertake to do it joyfully.

23 Standstill That which Impedes Ice

Isa

The winter of the spiritual life is upon you. You may find yourself entangled in a situation to whose implications you are, in effect, blind. You may be powerless to do anything except submit, surrender, even sacrifice some long-cherished desire. Be patient, for this is the period of gestation that precedes a rebirth.

Positive accomplishment is unlikely now. There is a freeze on useful activity, all your plans hold. You may be experiencing an unaccustomed drain on your energy and wonder why: a chill wind is reaching you over the ice floes of old outmoded habits.

Trying to hold on can result in shallowness of feeling, a sense of being out of touch with life. Seek to discover what it is you are holding onto that keeps this condition in effect, and let go. Shed, release, cleanse away the old. That will bring on the thaw.

Usually *Isa* requires a sacrifice of the personal, the 'I'. And yet there is no reason for anxiety. Submit and be still, for what you are experiencing is not necessarily the result of your actions or habits, but of the conditions of the time against which you can do nothing. What has

been full must be empty; what has increased must decrease. This is the way of Heaven and Earth. To surrender is to display courage and wisdom.

At such a time, do not hope to rely on help or friendly support. In your isolation, exercise caution and do not stubbornly persist in attempting to work your will. Remain mindful that the seed of the new is present in the shell of the old, the seed of unrealized potential, the seed of the good. Trust your own process, and watch for signs of spring.

24

Wholeness
Life Forces
The Sun's Energy

Sowelu

This Rune stands for wholeness, that which our nature requires. It embodies the impulse toward self-realization and indicates the path you must follow, not from ulterior motives but from the core of your individuality.

Seeking after wholeness is the Spiritual Warrior's quest. And yet what you are striving to become in actuality is what you, by nature, already are. You must become conscious of your essence – your *personal myth* – and bring it into form, express it in a creative way.

A Rune of great power, making life force available to you, *Sowelu* marks a time for recharging and regeneration right down to the cellular level. You may actually experience power surges, for the energies involved can be dramatic. Although this Rune has no Reversed position, there is reason for caution. You may even see fit to withdraw, to retreat in the face of a pressing situation, especially if events or people are demanding that you 'spend' your energy now. Know that such a retreat is a retreat in strength, and that it can mark a voyage inward for centring, for balance. Timely retreat is among the skills of the Spiritual Warrior.

At the same time, for some, this Rune counsels opening yourself up, letting the Light into a part of your life that has been secret, shut away. To accomplish this may call for profound recognitions, for admitting to yourself something that you have long denied. There is a prayer known as the *Gayatri* that embodies the spirit of *Sowelu*. Address the sun in this fashion:

You, who are the source of all power,
Whose rays illuminate the whole world,
Illuminate also my heart
So that it too can do your work.

While reciting the *Gayatri*, visualize the sun's rays streaming forth into the world, entering your own heart, and then streaming out from your heart centre. This is a powerful and life-enhancing prayer.

Again, there is a caution here not to give yourself airs. Even in a time of bountiful energy, you are required to face and vanquish your refusal to let right action flow through you. Nourish this capacity, for it is your true function.

Practise the art of doing without doing: aim yourself truly and then maintain your aim without manipulative effort. Meditate on Christ's words: *I can of mine own self do nothing*. For by our own power, we do nothing; even in loving, it is Love that loves through us. This way of thinking and being integrates new energies and permits us to flow into wholeness, which is the ultimate realization of your personal myth and the goal of the Spiritual Warrior.

25 The Unknowable The God Odin

The Blank Rune

Blank is the end, blank the beginning. This is the Rune of total trust and should be taken as exciting evidence of your most immediate contact with your own true destiny which, time and again, rises like the phoenix from the ashes of what we call fate.

The *Blank Rune* can portend a death. But that death is usually symbolic, and may relate to any part of your life as you are living it now. Relinquishing control is the ultimate challenge for the Spiritual Warrior.

Here the Unknowable informs you that it is in motion in your life. In that blankness is held undiluted potential. At the same time pregnant and empty, it comprehends the totality of being, all that is to be actualized.

Drawing the *Blank Rune* brings to the surface our deepest fears. Will I fail? Will I be abandoned? Will it all be taken away? And yet our highest good, our truest possibilities and all our fertile dreams are held within that blankness.

Willingness and permitting are what this Rune requires, for how can you exercise control over what is not yet in form? This Rune often calls for no less an act of

courage than the empty-handed leap into the void. Drawing it is a direct test of Faith.

In one sense, the *Blank Rune* represents the path of karma – the sum total of what you have done and the limits on what you are and will become. At the same time, this Rune teaches that the very debts of old karma shift and evolve as you shift and evolve. *Nothing is predestined;* there is nothing that cannot be avoided. And if, indeed, there are 'matters hidden by the gods, you need only remember: what beckons is the creative power of the unknown.

Whenever you draw the *Blank Rune*, take heart: know that the work of self-change is progressing in your life.

THE GIFT OF THE SELF

There are no more maps, no more creeds, no more philosophies. From here on in, the directions come straight from the Universe. the Curriculum is being revealed millisecond by millisecond – invisibly, intuitively, spontaneously, lovingly. As one of Thomas Merton's monks has it, 'Go into your cell and your cell will teach you everything there is to know.' Your cell. Yourself.

Akshara Noor

Warrior Horseman, Mjoboro, Uppland, Sweden,
sixth century

THEATRE OF THE SELF

We are all teachers, and what we teach is what we need to learn, and so we teach it over and over again until we learn it.

A principle of *A Course in Miracles*

Almost five months after the summer solstice brought me their order and meanings, the Runes communicated with me once again.

I was driving south along the Pacific Coast Highway when I got a strong feeling about the interrelated sequence of the Runes. I suddenly understood that each Rune is linked to the next not merely by meaning, but through a progressive development from Rune to Rune. The alphabet itself represents the twenty-five steps of the self growing into wholeness.

Without bothering to pull off the road, I opened my Rune notes and, starting with *Mannaz*, the Rune of the Self, jotted down the essential meaning for each Rune, connecting it to its neighbour. I wrote steadily as I drove, still in the fast lane, using the steering wheel as my table and glancing between the page and the highway. The

miles passed by and all the connections flowed into place. I was just coming to the Blank Rune when I caught a movement out of my right eye. Beyond the car window and staring at me with an expression that said 'I don't believe this!' was a Californian highway patrolman on his motorcycle. My speedometer registered 72 mph. We both pulled over. I didn't even try to explain.

At the roadside, I completed my notes. When I got home I recopied what I had written, observing its pattern, listening to its rhythm. Not only did the progression hold, it fell into five clusters or acts. Here then are the Viking Runes, divided into Five Acts, in the play of the self coming to the self.

Act I The starting point is the self ᛗ which, in its willingness to change, undertakes Partnership ᛝ at the highest level – Partnership with the Divine – and in so doing receives the Gift of freedom. The self is assisted in its urge to grow by the Messenger Rune ᚱ , which operates between the Divine and the self through Signals in the form of new connections that lead us into new pathways. During this process, there occurs a peeling away, a shedding of old skins that brings about Separation and Retreat ᛟ , loosening the bonds we have inherited from being in the world. Now that transformation is underway, the Strength ᚢ , becomes available for growth into Manhood and Womanhood.

Act II This is the moment of Initiation ᛈ when release of the old leads to new wholeness. The process occurs on an inner level and nothing external matters

here. Next, the self undergoes the pain of Necessary Constraint in order to be cleansed and healed, for rectification precedes progress. Out of the cleansing comes Fertility, New Beginnings . Since the new creature is totally vulnerable, Defence is provided: through being tested we develop the power to avoid self-injury. This Rune is followed by another more positive form of Protection , which calls for correct conduct and timely action. To progress well is the best protection.

Act III Now the self can receive the Nourishment it requires, either in the form of Possessions or through achievement of well-being and self-rule. This brings Joy and Happiness from within , a sense of having come to oneself. There follows next a period of waiting for the Harvest , a time marked by patience and perseverance and careful cultivation until, at the harvest time, the self experiences an Opening Up , a new Light in which both to receive and to know the joy of giving. And by this new Light is revealed the birth of the Spiritual Warrior , who possesses the power of discrimination by which to cut away the old outgrown life. With the birth of the Spiritual Warrior, we arrive at the Third Act curtain, the essential mid-point of our journey.

Act IV As the Spiritual Warrior pursues the path with a heart, Growth is the main concern. There is no urge to turn back. The self is more centred, better prepared when, with Movement , changes and progress come; for as we cultivate our nature, all else follows. There is

increased attunement with the intuitive, Fluidity, That Which Conducts ᛚ , and, at this level, another cleansing and balancing occurs. Now the self is prepared for the upsurge of Natural Forces ᚺ , forces that disrupt it totally ᚺ as old outmoded habits fall away. At last, a new synthesis is possible, marked by Communication ᚱ , a journey toward Reunion with the Higher Self on the path toward Union with the Divine.

Act V The path stretches upward, climbing to a Gateway ᚹ , a place of Non-Action calling for meditation on the progress so far. Integration is the hallmark of this second stage of Initiation. For beyond the Gateway lies a major Breakthrough , a Transformation ᛞ signified by radical trust and a leap of Faith. Then everything is blocked, the way Impeded ᛁ until, out of that icebound stage the Sun, Life Force ᛋ liberates new energies, a new way of being. And finally, the Spiritual Warrior arrives at the Rune of All-in-All, the Blank Rune ᛒ , from whose blankness comes again, in eternal renewal, the starting point for the self...

At the end of Act V, you are once more at the beginning, a new beginning.

AFTERWORD: MAGIC IN THE PRESENT TENSE

God is alive, magic is afoot.

Leonard Cohen

At our best, each of us is a channel through which God's wisdom flows, and we are sensitive to the inner guidance that provides us with the intuitive knowing we require. But life can be hard and difficult and we are not always clear. The channels that we are become blocked by fears, silted up with self-doubt. We do not always hear the still small voice that is our natural inheritance.

The Runes are available to be used as a bridge to your Higher Self. While contemplating a Rune chosen to illuminate a particular issue, remain clear about one thing: *you are not depending on the Oracle to solve your problems for you*. Images and thoughts will come to mind, image-ideas that will provide you with the necessary clues as to what constitutes timely right action. Working with the Oracle in this way, you will fund a new sense of confidence, a new kind of courage.

The Viking Runes are a mirror for the magic of our

Higher Selves. They are magical play and sacred play. In time, as you become skilled in their use, you can perhaps lay the Runes aside and permit the knowing to arise unfiltered, just as some dowsers use only their bare hands to find water. Tuning in directly to the Higher Self is owning your own power as a Co-Creator, and that is the ultimate 'magic' toward which this world is tending, toward which the rivers of awareness flow.

Any Oracle is a reflection of the culture in which it evolves. The roots of the Tarot and the *I Ching* are not Western roots; the Tarot did not emerge into Western life until the Runes were more than 1,000 years old; the *I Ching* took another 800 years to reach us. In the Runes we are provided with a symbolic system that derives from our own consciousness, an Oracle arising within the forms of Western thought. All this makes the Viking Runes uniquely ours. Thus it seems to me both timely and providential that the Runes once again be restored to service as a truly Western Oracle.

To all of you who have arrived at this place of termination and new beginnings, *Gud blessi thig*.

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Stone lion, with runic graffiti, Piraeus, Greece

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Ralph Blum

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ralph Blum received his degree in Russian studies at Harvard University. Following a period in Italy as a Fulbright scholar he returned to Harvard where he did graduate work in anthropology with grants from the National Science Foundation and the Ford Foundation. He is a writer, lecturer and publisher.

FUTHARK (Traditional Order)

MODERN ENGLISH LETTER	OLD ENGLISH RUNES	OLD ENGLISH NAMES	GERMANIC RUNES	GERMANIC NAMES	ETRUSCAN	PRE-RUNIC SYMBOLS
f	ᚠ	feoh	ᚠ	fehu	𐌃	
u	ᚢ	ūr	ᚢ	ūruz	𐌖𐌅	△
þ(th)	ᚦ	þorn	ᚦ	þurisaz		
a	ᚪ	ōs	ᚨ	ansuz	𐌀	
r	ᚱ	rād	ᚱ	raiðō	𐌓	
k	ᚳ	cēn	ᚲ	kaunaz kēnaz kanō	𐌒𐌊	
g	ᚷ	gyfu	ᚷ	gebō		ᚷ
w	ᚹ	wyn	ᚹ	wunjō		
h	ᚻ	hœgl	ᚺ	hagalaz	𐌇	𐌇
n	ᚾ	nȳð	ᚾ	nauþiz	𐌍(𐌗)	+
i	ᛁ	īs	ᛁ	īsa-	𐌉	ᛁ
j	ᛄ	gēr	ᛃ	jēra-		ᛃ
e(ei)	ᛇ	ēōh	ᛇ	eihwaz		𐌕 ᛊ
p	ᛈ	peorð	ᛈ	perþ	𐌐	
z	ᛉ	eolh(secg)	ᛉ	algiz	𐌉ǂ	ᛉ ᛯ
s	ᛋ	sigel	ᛊ	sowelu	ᛊᛊ	
t	↑	tīr	↑	teiwaz	𐌕𐌗	↑ ↟
b	ᛒ	beorc	ᛒ	berkana		
e	ᛖ	e(o)h	ᛖ	ehwaz	𐌄	
m	ᛗ	man	ᛗ	mannaz	𐌌𐌍	
l	ᛚ	lagu	ᛚ	laguz	𐌋	
ng	ᛝ	Ing	ᛜ	inguz	ᛜ	□ᛜ
o	ᛟ	ēþel	ᛟ	oþila		ᛞ ᛞ
ð	ᛞ	daeg	ᛞ	ðagaz		ᛞ

Note: While the order of Rune names was to some degree fortuitous, the choice of names was not. A Rune name had to begin with a given sound and possess mnemonic power.

THE VIKING RUNES (read from right to left)

5. *Uruz*
page 65

4. *Othila*
page 63

3. *Ansuz*
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2. *Gebo*
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1. *Mannaz*
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10. *Algiz*
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9. *Eihwaz*
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8. *Inguz*
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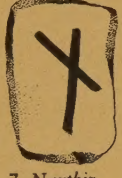

7. *Nauthiz*
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6. *Perth*
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15. *Teiwaz*
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14. *Kano*
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13. *Jera*
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12. *Wunjo*
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11. *Fehu*
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20. *Raido*
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19. *Hagalaz*
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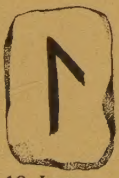

18. *Laguz*
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17. *Ehwaz*
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16. *Berkana*
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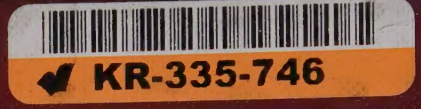
25. *Odin*

24. *Sowelu*

23. *Isa*

22. *Dagaz*

21. *Thurisaz*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